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CHRISTIAN HVMILIATION,

OR,

A TREATISE OF FASTING:

Declaring the Nature, Kindes, Ends, *Vses, and Properties of a Religious* FAST:

Together with a briefe Discourse concerning the Fast of LENT.

By *Henry Mason*, Pastor of Saint *Andrews*-Vndershaft *London*.

LONDON:
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1625.

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A TREATISE OF FASTING:

Declaring the Nature, Kinds, End, Parts, and Profitableness of that Religious Fast:

Together with a brief Discourse concerning the Fast of Lent.

By Henry Hickman, Pastor of Saint

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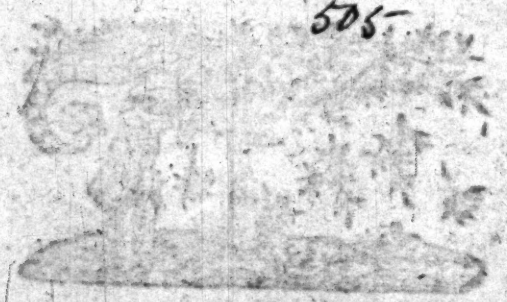

Printed by G. P. for [illegible], and are to be sold at his Shop under [illegible] in Cornhill.

1652.

TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFVLL,

Mr. *Henry King*, Arch-Deacon of *Colchester*, Canon-Residentiary of the Cathedrall Church of St. *Paul*, and eldest *Sonne to the worthy Prelate* Dr. KING, late Bishop of *London*:

Reuerend SIR,

HAuing vpon occasion hertofore looked somewhat into the nature & properties of a religious Fast, I found it so pleasing to God and so profitable for men, that I was thereupon induced not onely to make vse of it in mine owne practice, but to cõmend it also in the exercise of my Ministery, to my Hearers and Parishioners. And for the same reason, I haue now aduentured to offer my Meditations on this subiect to the

view of the world abroad; hoping that some may be occasioned hereby to make a better vse of this holy discipline, then of late yeeres men haue bin accustomed to doe. For howsoeuer I haue incurred some mens censures already, by speaking mine opinion, and shall now in all likelihood, by printing it, incurre the censures of other moe, especially of such forward spirits, as vse to condemne before they consider; yet I hope I shall be able to approue my Conclusions to the moderate & iudicious Readers. For (if I doe not much mistake my selfe; and if I erre, I desire to bee directed better:) I haue on my side first of all the holy and blessed Scripture, the supreme Iudge of Controuersies, against whose sentence there can lye no exception or appeale. Secondly, I haue also the constant and vniforme consent of learned Fathers, and of the Primitiue and ancient Church, whose vnanimous iudgement all sober men will so farre respect, as not to swarue from it, vnlesse they can cleerely proue that it swarueth frō Gods Word. And lastly, I haue also the approbation of this present Church of *England*; whom

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her owne children may not lightly eſteeme, without contempt offered to their heauenly Father: and I for my part, do ſo much reſpect and reuerence, that beſides the Obſeruance, which is due to her as my Mother, I am alſo perſwaded in my ſoule, that ſhe is the pureſt & beſt reformed Church in *Europe*; & doe bleſſe God vpon my knees, that hath appointed her to be my Mother, & my ſelfe to be bred and brought vp in her lapp. In which perſwaſion, beſide the maine reaſons or grounds of my beliefe, not now to be inſiſted vpon, I am the rather confirmed alſo, becauſe I know it was the conſtant opinió & profeſſió of your worthy Father, my much reuerenced Lord: whoſe iudgemét I do highly & deſeruedly eſteeme; & whoſe memory I ſhal euer deſire to honor with all dutifull and thankfull reſpect. And were he now aliue, I ſhould not ſeeke a Patrone for this little Booke elſewhere. But ſince that GOD hath tranſlated him from vs into the company of the glorified Saints; as I could not diuert my thoughts altogether fró him, but ſhould rather haue offered this poore ſeruice to his Aſhes, then not to haue mentio-

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ned my respectiue dutie to his name: so I could not find any better resemblance of him vpō earth, in which I might see him pourtrayed and in some sort made present to mee, then in your selfe, who being his first-borne, doe beare a liuely image both of his person and vertues. In regard of all which, my humble request is, that you will accept of this small Treatise in stead of him who is gone, & suffer it vnder your shaddow to beare your Fathers name. And so, with my best prayers for your happines, I leaue you to Gods blessing.

Your most affectionate friend,

HENRY MASON.

CHRISTIAN HVMILIATION:

OR,

A TREATISE OF FASTING:

Declaring the Nature, Kindes, Ends, Vſes, and Properties of a Religious FAST.

THere are but two wayes to pleaſe God, and by pleaſing him, to come to eternall life, either perfect obedience to Gods Lawe, or vnfeined repentance for our ſinnes. By the firſt way, *Adam* in his innocency might haue obtained happineſſe: but ſince *Adams* fall, there is no way left but the ſecond. For *all haue ſinned, and are depriued of the glory of God.* And now the Scriptures doe preſſe Repentance the fore-runner of pardon, as that without which we

cannot be eyther freed from sinne, or receyued to Gods fauour. And this is the cause, that Gods children haue so vsually accustomed themselues to all meanes of humiliation, by which they might eyther encrease or expresse their repentance and godly sorrow. Amongst which meanes they found none more effectuall (and therefore amongst them we finde none to haue beene more vsuall) then abstinence and fasting. The consideration whereof, together with the condition of our times, hath prouoked mee to looke into the nature of this thing, which eyther was too much vsed in former times, or else is a great deale too much neglected in ours. And that I might haue some directions to rule my meditations by, I thought it conuenient to take for my groundworke, the words of the Euangelist, where hee saith of our blessed Sauiour; [a] *And when he had fasted forty dayes and forty nights, hee was afterwards an hungred.* In which words there are three things specified: first, what our Sauiour did, *he fasted*: secondly, how long hee continued herein, *forty dayes, and forty nights*: thirdly, what befell him in the end, *hee was afterward an hungred*. And within the compasse of these three things, I shall (God willing) bound and comprize my following meditations. In handling whereof, I thinke it not amisse to prescribe to my selfe this method. First, to speake of fasting in generall, and as it is considered by it selfe. Secondly, to consider it as it was heere practized by our Sauiour. And lastly, to adde a few words of

a Matth. 4. 2.

our Sauiours hungring, which is the consequent of his abstinence and fasting.

And first, for fasting in generall, there are these things to be considered:

1 *What fasting is, and what this word doth import.*

2 *What sorts of fasting are commended to vs in Scriptures for our vse.*

3 *How and wherein it may further vs for holy duties, and workes of Gods seruice.*

4 *What conditions are required in our fasting, that it may be accepted.*

5 *In what cases, and for what purposes it may serue vs to obtaine help and fauour from the Lord.*

Secondly, for fasting, as it was exercised by our Sauiour, wee haue these poynts to consider of:

1 *Why our Lord did fast at all.*

2 *Why he fasted forty dayes, and forty nights.*

3 *When, or at what times, men may or ought to fast.*

4 *How long a Christian should continue his fast.*

5 *What we are to thinke of that forty dayes fast of Christians, commonly called* Ieiunium Quadragesimale, *or Lent-Fast.*

These, with a briefe touch of Christs hungring, which is the third generall poynt, are the subiect and matter of the Discourse following.

Chap. I.

What Faſting is.

THe moſt vſuall deſcription of Faſting is, that it is *an Abſtinence from meat and drinke*. And this deſcription is very agreeable to the manner of ſpeech, vſed by the Scriptures; which when they ſpeak of faſting, doe many times mention, and alwayes intend an abſtayning from food. As *Eſter* 4. 16. *Goe* (ſaith *Eſter*) *gather together all the Iewes that are preſent in Shuſhan, and faſt yee for mee.* But how ſhall this be done? It followes; *And neither eate nor drinke three dayes, night or day: I alſo and my Maides will faſt likewiſe.* And ſo *Ionae* 3. 7. *Let neither Man nor Beaſt, &c. taſte any thing. Let them not feede, nor drinke water.* And *Luke* 5. 33. *Why doe the Diſciples of Iohn faſt often, &c. but thine eate and drinke?* Which ſpeech [a] other Euangeliſts doe expreſſe in theſe words: *Why doe the Diſciples of Iohn, and of the Phariſes faſt, but thy Diſciples faſt not?* Where wee may note, firſt that Saint *Luke* maketh an oppoſition between faſting, and eating or drinking. Secondly, That that which Saint *Luke* calleth *eating and drinking*, the other Euangeliſts call *not faſting*. And by both theſe wee may gather, that faſting includeth an abſtinence

[a] Mar. 2. 18. Mat. 9. 14.

abstinence from meat and drinke. But thus farre the poynt is cleare. Onely a further question may be asked, what kinde of abstinence this is; whether totall and entier, from all meate and drinke, and from tasting of any thing, as the men of *Nineueh* and *Ester* seeme to speake: or whether a partiall kinde of abstinence; which is a forbearing of nourishing and pleasant meat onely, may not sometimes suffice, as that place of *Daniel* seemeth to import, where the Prophet speaking of his fasting, saith, *I* [a] *ate no pleasant bread, neyther came flesh nor wine in my mouth, &c. till three whole weekes were fulfilled.* a Dan.10.3.

For answer hereto, it must first of all be noted, that abstinence vsed in a fast may be considered two wayes. First, in respect of one onely act or time of abstinence, continued without any interruption; as when it is said, that the Israelites [b] *wept and fasted that day, vntill euen*; and that the Iewes should [c] *fast, and not eate nor drinke three dayes, day or night*; and that our Sauiour [d] *fasted forty dayes and forty nights*: there is meant one continued act or space of abstinence, without any intermission or interruption of the abstinence then vsed. Secondly, It may bee considered in respect of many multiplyed acts, or distinct times of abstinence, one immediately following after another. As for example, when it is said of the men of *Iabesh*, that they *fasted* [e] *seuen dayes*, the meaning is not, that they fasted so long, by one continued and vninterrupted act of abstinence, but that they fasted euery one of those 7. dayes, eating

b Iudg.20.26.
c Ester 4.16.
d Matth.4.2.
e 1 Sam.31.vlt. &c. 1 Chron.10.12.

eating nothing all the day long, and at euening making a spare and course meale, as was agreeable to a time of mourning. Thus not onely [a] *Osiander* among the Protestants, but among the Papists [b] *Tostatus* doth interpret that place; and addeth withall, that this *fast* of theirs *was according to the custome of the Iewes, which was, that they did not eate any thing all the day long, till the Sun-set*, but then did eate. And in the like sence, they of the Romane Church do say, that themselues fast all Lent, when notwithstanding, they doe not without interruption obserue that kinde of abstinence, which themselues require in a Fast: for on Sundayes at least, all Lent long, they intermit their abstinence, and fast not, no not after their owne manner of fasting. Sometimes then a man may be said to fast such a space of time, because all that time he vseth such abstinence, as is required in one vninterrupted act or time of fasting; and sometimes againe hee may be said to fast so long or for such a time, because hee vseth sundry such multiplyed acts or times of abstinence, or because hee vseth many such Fasting-dayes together, one after another.

[a] Osiand. in 1. Chro. 10. 12.

[b] *Erat istud ieiunium secundùm morem Hebræorum, scilicet, quòd non comederent totâ die aliquid vsque ad Solis occasum.* Tostat. in 1. Regum, cap. 31. ad finem quæst. 18. pag. 327. A.

This being first noted for a ground, my answer to the doubt is:

Answ. 1. If wee speake of a fast, as it consisteth of one onely single act, without interruption of the abstinence required, then it is vnheard of, in Scriptures, that there is any vse of meate or drinke, or tasting of food, while that fast lasteth. But if wee speake of a fast as consisting of many such

such acts, multiplyed and added together, then it is necessary, that some refreshing be had between those seuerall acts or distinct times: and vsuall it is, that such refection then vsed, should be sparing for the quantity of meat, and homely for the quality of it. And such a fast as this was that of *Daniels*, when hee saith: *I was mourning three full weekes, I ate no pleasant bread, &c.* For the meaning is, that hee fasted euery day for three weekes space, without eating or drinking or tasting any food all the day long: but when the day was ended, he brake off his abstinence, by a slender supper. And so this place proueth not, but that a Fast doth include a totall abstinence from all meat. And this to be the meaning of the place, I am induced to thinke, because the words doe import so much, & the custome of the Iewes in their fasting doth require this construction. For the learned doe agree, that this was the custome of the Iewes, that when they fasted, they did eate nothing all day, till the euening; that by reason of this custome, when men are said to fast many dayes, it may reasonably be vnderstood, that they fasted all the day, and at night ate something: and that for this cause Saint *Matthew* did say that Christ did *fast forty dayes, and forty nights*, adding the mention of nights, lest men should thinke that he fasted those forty dayes according to the custome of the Iewes, eating at night, after he had abstayned from food all the day. To this purpose *Tostatus* [a] saith, that Christ is said to *fast as well the nights as the dayes, for two reasons: first, because*

[a] *Nam diebus, quibus noctibus ieiunabat* [Christus.] *Hoc autem dicitur propter duo: primò propter consuetudinem Ieiunij Iudaeorum. Nam Iudaei, quando ieiunant, per totam diem nihil comedunt, nisi post occasum Solis, cùm incipiunt apparere astra, per noctem comedunt, &c. Si ergo diceretur, quòd Christus ieiunauit quadragesima diebus, intelligeretur, quòd per noctes comedebat, sicut Iudaei solitum erat.* Tostat. in 4. Matt. q. 11. pag. 372. B.

because of the custome of the Iewes. For they, when they fast, doe eate nothing all the day, till after Sunsetting, and at night, when Starres appeare, then they eate. And therefore, *if it were said* (saith he) *that Christ fasted fortie dayes, it would be vnderstood, that at nights he did eate, as the Iewes were wont to doe.* And Maldonat, [a] *The Euangelist* (saith he) *added the mention of nights, that he might shew that Christ did not fast after the maner of the Iewes; who taking no meate nor drinke all the day, did eate at night.* And Lucas Brugensis, [b] *There is mention added of nights, lest a man should thinke, that this Fast* of our Sauiour, *was such as the Fast of the Iewes was, according to the Law; who being commanded to fast by day, might eate in the euening.* And in like sort Iansenius, [c] There *is mention also of nights* (saith he) *as there is likewise in the Fast of Moses, to distinguish Christs fasting from the fasting of the Iewes, who fasting all day, at night did take meate.* And if this was the custome of fasting at those times, and this the vse of speech among that people, That if men were said to fast some dayes, without expresse mention of nights, it would be vnderstood, that he did not eate nor drinke any thing all the day, but did eate at night: then, in all reason of the world, we must so vnderstand these words of the Prophet *Daniel*, as learned *Kemnitius* [d] also doth.

Answ. 2. Secondly, I answere, That a Fast is either properly so called, or improperly, and by

[a] *Aut Ideo diebus Euangelista noctes adiecit: vt indicaret eum non Iudæorum more ieiunasse, qui per diem nihil cibi potusve sumentes, noctu vescebatur.* Mal. in Matt. 4. 2.

[b] *Noctium additur mentio, ne putes Ieiunium fuisse, quale Iudæorum iuxta legem, qui interdiu ieiunare iussi, vesperi noctuq; edere poterant.* Luc. Brugens. in Mat. 4. 2.

[c] *Noctium etiam fit mentio, quemadmodum & in Ieiunio Mosis, ad distinctionem Ieiunij Christi à Ieiunijs Iudæorũ, qui tota die ieiunantes, in vespera & nocte cibum sumpserunt.* Iansen. harm. Cap. 15. pag. 124. col. 2.

[d] Harm. Euangel. ca. 51. Pericop. 6. pag. 817. & col. 2.

Exam. Concil. Trident. part. 4. de Ieiun. nu. 25, 26. pag. 89.

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an imperfect kinde of partaking with it. [a] Properly he is only said to fast, that abstaineth from all foode, whether meat or drinke. And improperly or imperfectly a man may (perhaps) bee said to fast, when hee forbeareth pleasant and nourishing meate, & contenteth himselfe with course feeding. And in this sense, if any man doe abstaine from Flesh and Wine, and other such strong nourishment, that hee may expresse a holy and religious sorrow, I will not gain-say him, if he call it a Fast; but I must adde withall, that it is an improper and imperfect kind of Fast, and such as I no where finde so called in the Scriptures; nor, as I thinke, is it to be found in the ancient Fathers and Writers of the Church.

Answ. 3. Thirdly, I answer, That this partiall and imperfect abstinence, may not go, no not so much as for an improper or vnperfect Fast, vnlesse the meate that is then vsed, bee sparing and course; and such, as that it may in part afflict Nature, while it doth in some sort refresh it; such as *Daniels* was, when he *ate no pleasant bread, nor dranke no Wine*; and by vsing of which in place of his ordinary food, he is said to *chasten himselfe*. For else, if there bee a forbearing of one meate, that we may glut or fill our selues with other; or an abstinence from one kind of food, that we may feede on another no lesse strengthening, and such as doth content Nature as well; this is no fasting at all, but a changing of pasture rather; nor is it an abstaining from meate, but an vsing of variety of Cates.

[a] *Perpetua S. Scripturæ phrasis et sanctorum omnium in V. & N. T. praxis apertè docent eos demùm verè ieiunare, qui prorsus ab omni cibo abstinẽt, siue per vnũ, siue per plures aliquot dies. Impropriè tamen ieiunium dicì potest, cùm quis parcè vel tenuiter viuit, vel etiam à prandio aut cœna abstinet. Idem iudicium esto de ieiunio in quo adhibetur ciborum delectus.* Alsted. Theol. Polem. part. 4. de Ieiun. Contr. 1. pa. 506.

Dan. 10. 12. *Sunt qui vinum nõ bibunt, vt aliorum expressiones pomorũ alios sibi liquores, nõ salutis causâ, sed iucunditatis exquirant, tanquam non sit Quadragesimæ pia humilitatis obseruatio, sed nouæ voluptatis ostensio.* August. de diuers. serm. 74. ca. 3. pa. 499. H.

And out of this I deduce two conclusions:

1. That they who thinke themselues warranted by *Daniels* example in this place, to eate their dinner when they keepe a Fast, doe greatly deceiue themselues, and much mistake the Prophets meaning.

2. That they who thinke that *Daniels* practice doth iustifie their choice of meats, in their time of fasting, when they forbeare flesh onely, and feed on all sorts of fish, and eate cherishing rootes, and drinke the strongest Wines, are much mistaken, and build vpon a sandie ground. For *Daniel* did neither dine, nor drinke Wine, nor eate any pleasant meat.

Chap. II.

What sorts or kinds of fasting are commended to vs in Scriptures.

IN the Scriptures wee finde diuers kinds of fasting mentioned; some whereof are commended for religious vses; and others are passed ouer, as no way concerning the spirituall state of our soules. For differencing whereof, we may note these distinctions following.

1. *Dist.* Some Fasts are necessary and by constraint, when men are compelled to fast, because they

they haue not either ſtomach or meate. Such was the faſt of the Ægyptian, who was forſaken by his company, & being left ſicke in the Fields, was almoſt dead for want of victuals. And ſome Faſts again, are voluntary, vndertakē of a mans own accord, and by his owne free choyce; of which kind there are many examples in the Scriptures. The former of theſe is rather a hungring then a faſting: for, *Ieiunium voluntatis eſt, fames neceſſitatis*; *Faſting is an act of the will, but hunger is of neceſſity*, and whether a man will or no; as Saint *Auſtin* ſpeaketh. And therefore this can bee no act of vertue, becauſe it is not voluntary, but neceſſarie. And conſequently, it is not that Faſt that is commended for Religion ſake. And therefore the voluntary Faſt onely, is it which belongeth to this place, and is for our purpoſe.

1 Sam. 30. 12.

(a) Aug. in Pſalm. 42. pag. 138. F.

2. *Diſt.* Voluntary Faſts are of two ſorts. They are either worldly and prophane, or religious and holy.

Worldly and prophane I call thoſe, whoſe end is for ſome worldly vſe, or for ſome reſpect belonging to this life. And theſe are diuers. For ſometimes men may faſt for effecting of ſome worldly buſineſſe with better ſpeede; as *Saul* and his ſouldiers did, when the people taſted no food, becauſe the King had *adiured them, ſaying; Curſed be the man that eateth any foode vntill Euening, that I may be auenged on mine enemies.* Where we ſee the reaſon of this faſt was, becauſe the King would not allow them any time of eating, for that they might beſtow all the time in purſuing of the Ene-

1 Sam. 14. 24.

mie. And ſo in like ſort a man may faſt for his health, that he may cõcoct his vndigeſted humors; & for his gaine, that he may ſpare his purſe; & for the publike good, that he may preſerue the breede of Cattell: [a] yea, and for very luxurie, and of a gluttonous diſpoſition, that he may keepe his ſtomach for better cheere. When men faſt for theſe or any ſuch like other ends, their Faſts are worldly and prophane, and therfore haue no place among religious exerciſes.

[a] *Non laudatur in illo ieiunium, qui ad luxuriosã cenã seruat ventrem suum.* Aug. in Pſal. 43. pag. 142. E. *Ieiunant quidã, (ait Auguſtin.) ne ventrem vilia praeoccupent, & non possent intrare pretiosa.* Daneus Iſagog. p. 3. de vita hominis. Ca. 32.

The ſecond ſort are holy and religious Faſts. And ſo I call thoſe, which are intended and doe ſerue for ſome ſpeciall vſe, which concerneth Gods glory, and the good of a mans ſoule. To this purpoſe is that, which wee reade in the Prophet, where GOD ſpeakes thus to the people; [b] *When ye faſted and mourned in the fifth and ſeuenth moneth, euen thoſe ſeuentie yeeres, did ye at all faſt vnto mee, euen to me? And when ye did eate, and when ye did drinke, did ye not eate for your ſelues, and drinke for your ſelues?* In which words wee may note, how God doth reiect the Faſts of this people, becauſe they were not vndertaken for GOD and his ſeruice, but for themſelues, and to ſerue their owne turnes. And this ſheweth, that the Faſts which pleaſe God, muſt be ſuch as may ſerue for his glory. And therefore theſe Faſts doe only belong to this place. And conſequently, wee may fitly define a religious Faſt, as a learned man hath done; [c] That *it is a voluntary abſtinence from meate and drinke for Religion ſake.*

(b) Zach. 7. 5, 6.

[c] *Ieiunium religioſum eſt voluntaria abſtinentia à cibo & potu religionis cauſã.* Feſt. Hommius Diſput. 69. nu. 2. pag. 467.

But heere a queſtion may bee asked, which it will

will bee requisite to resolue before I goe on. For it may be demanded, If the end of our fasting bee that which maketh the difference between religious and prophane Fasts; what if both these ends doe concurre and meete together in one and the same act of fasting? As for example, I may fast for my bodily health, and for preuenting of some distemper, that fulnesse would breed; and yet at the same time, and by the same act, I my beate downe my body, and make it more seruiceable to the soule, and I may withall preuent pride and wantonnesse, which full-feeding might procure. Or (which is all to one purpose) I may fast to tame the pride of the flesh, and to humble my selfe for my sinnes; and withall, by the same meanes, I may both saue my purse, and further my health, and preuent sickenesse in my body. And when both these ends doe in this maner concurre, what a Fast shall I call this? Is it a worldly Fast, because it hath a worldly vse? or is it a religious Fast, because it hath a religious vse? or is it both, because it hath both ends?

Ans. Either the one of these ends is directly intended, and the other doth accidentally follow, besides the mans intendment & purpose: or else both of them are intended by him that keepeth the fast. If the one onely be intended, then as the rule is, *Denominatio sequitur præstantiorem partem; The denomination followeth the preuailing side:* so we must say, that the end which is intended, giueth the denomination to the fast, and not that which accidentally concurreth. As for example, if a man

onely aime at a spirituall end, though another vse follow vpon it, yet the fast is religious still. And if he haue onely a worldly purpose, though a spirituall vse doe accompany it besides his intention, yet the fast is worldly and prophane notwithstanding. But if his intention be mixt, and hee at once, and in the same fast doe propose to himselfe both a worldly and a spirituall vse together; then concerning such a fast I say three things:

First, That so farre forth it partaketh of eyther kinde, as eyther of the vses are intended, *that is*, the Fast is so farre forth to be called Religious, as a religious vse is intended in it, and so farre forth worldly, as the end is worldly.

Secondly, That so much as is mixed of the one end, is diminished of the other. As for example, if a man fast, partly that hee may humble himselfe by sorrow for his sinne, and partly that by concocting raw humours hee may gayne the better health, this latter respect doth so much diminish of the worth of the former, as it selfe is herein intended. And the reason is, because the intentions of a mans minde cannot entirely and perfectly be imployed vpon two contrary or diuers obiects at once. And therefore, so much of his intention as a man bestoweth vpon himselfe, so much hee taketh away from God.

Thirdly, It is not safe to mingle a worldly and spirituall respect together in one & the same Fast, if wee may with conueniency separate and diuide them. My reason is, because wee (such is our corruption) are apt to flatter our selues, and thinke better

better of our workes than they doe deſerue: and if one action may both make for Gods honor, and our owne profit, wee are ready to thinke wee doe all for God, when the greateſt part is for our ſelues. And therefore the ſafeſt way will bee to ſeuer and diſioyne theſe vſes, if with conueniency wee may doe it, that ſo while we faſt for God, we may not haue any worldly reſpect that may moue vs vnto it at the ſame time. And becauſe the eſpeciall reſpects of the world that doe moſt vſually intermingle themſelues with our holy Faſts, are one of the two, eyther reſpect of gayne, by ſauing the charges of dyet, or preſeruing of health, by concocting of raw humours: Wee may for direction in theſe caſes, take theſe two Rules.

1. Rule, That if faſting be neceſſary for our health, wee firſt vſe it ſo long and ſo much as is needfull for that purpoſe, and then at other times vndertake our religious Faſts, that ſo wee may ayme onely at a ſpirituall vſe.

2. Rule, That when by faſting we ſaue charges, we then giue away our ſauings to the poore, without diminiſhing any other part of our almes. And ſo doing, wee ſhall not onely free our religious Faſts from the tincture of worldly thrift, but ſhall alſo exerciſe another holy ducty of mercifulneſſe and charity. A thing which the ancient Fathers haue thought moſt neceſſary at the times of our faſting: and therefore haue beene vſed to preſſe this ducty with much earneſtneſſe in their Sermons to the people. [a] *To whom wilt thou giue that which by faſting thou haſt ſpar'd from thy*

[a] *Cui dabis quod tibi abſtuliſti? Ita ieiuna, vt alio manducante prandiſſe te gaudeas.* Auguſt. in Pſalm. 42. in fine.

thy selfe? saith Saint *Augustine. So fast, that by anothers eating thou mayest be glad that thou hast dyned.* And againe, [b] *That our Fasts may be full, let them be fatted with Almes-deedes. Let vs giue our dinner to them that be hungry:* And againe, [c] *Especially* (saith he) *be mindfull of the poore, that what you subtract from your selues, yee may lay it vp in the Treasury of Heauen. Let hungring Christ receiue that which the fasting Christian doth abate, &c.* And so *Leo*; [d] *Let the feeding of the poore giue testimony to our fasting.* And, [e] *That which a man doth with-draw from his dainty fare, let him bestow vpon the impotent and needy.* And to like purpose speake others also.

Dist. 3. Religious fasts are of two sorts; they are eyther publique or priuate fasts. Publique I call those, when a whole company, as when a Citie, Towne, or Parish doe by publique order ioyne together in this seruice. Such a fast was that of the *Ninenites* in the third Chapter of *Ionas*, and that which was prescribed to the Iewes in the fourth of *Ester*.

Secondly, the priuate fast is, when men out of their owne deuotions, and by their owne direction doe in their priuate houses vse abstinence in a religious manner. Such a fast was that of *Daniel*, mentioned in his tenth Chapter: and that of *Nehemiah* in the first Chapter of his Booke. And both these kindes, both the priuat and publique fasts, haue their approbation in Scriptures, and are commendable if they be vsed aright, as appeareth by the examples alledged already, and will

b *Ieunia nostra vt plena sint & suffarta, misericordiæ pinguedine saginantur, demus surientibus prandium nostrum.* De Temp. Serm. 65. pag. 232. C.

c *Præcipuè sanè pauperum memento; vt quod vobis parcijs viuendo subtrahitis; in cœlesti Thesauro reponatis. Accipiat esuriens Christus quod Ieiunans minùs accipit Christianus. Cassigatio volentis fiat sustentatio non habentis, &c.* Augustin. de diuers. Serm. 74. cap. 10. pag. 500. A.

d *Ieiunijs nostris egentium refectio suffragetur.* Leo Serm. 10. de Quadragesi.

e *Quod suis quisque delicijs subtrahit, debilibus impendat & egenis.* Leo de Quadragesi. Serm. 11.

will more fully appeare afterwards in the proceſſe of this diſcourſe.

Diſt. 4. Religious faſts, whether priuate or publique, may againe be diuided into two ſorts; For ſome are extraordinary, and others are ordinary. The extraordinary are ſuch, as are kept vpon ſome ſpeciall and extraordinary occaſion, as eyther for remouing of ſome ſpeciall iudgement, then eyther felt or feared, or for obtayning of ſome benefit or bleſſing, whereof then there is eſpeciall need and exigence. Such was the faſt of the *Niniuites*, which they vndertooke vpon the feare of deſtruction threatned by the Prophet. And ſuch was the faſt of *Dauid*, which he vndertooke vpon occaſion of his Childes ſickneſſe, and danger of death in him. The ordinary faſts are ſuch as are kept for an vſuall exerciſe of the ſoule, without any other cauſe than ſuch as may befall euery one of vs at all times. Now for the former of theſe kindes of faſting, it is generally agreed, that they are both lawfull and vſefull: but concerning the later, that is the ordinary, there hath a queſtion beene made by ſome later Diuines, who diſpute & determine againſt the vſe of them. But (as I take it) the caſe is cleare enough to the contrary. And my reaſons are: firſt, becauſe this kinde of faſt hath approbation in the Scriptures: and ſecondly, becauſe it hath the profitable vſes for our ſoules, for which religious faſts were ordayned.

Reaſon firſt from Scriptures.

First, becauſe it hath approbation from Scriptures. For I reade, that God himſelfe commanded

an ordinary fast to be obserued by the Iewes euery yeere. *This* (saith hee) *shall be a Statute for euer vnto you, that in the seuenth moneth, in the tenth day of the moneth, yee shall afflict your soules, &c.* Where that the afflicting spoken of was partly by inward sorrow for their sinnes, and partly by outward abstinence from meat and other contentments of nature, is agreed vpon by all sides. And that this abstinence and humiliation was an ordinary exercise of pietie, cannot bee doubted, if we consider that it was appoynted euery yeere, and in the same moneth, and vpon the same day. For it is not to bee imagined, that extraordinary occasions of humiliation should happen euery yeere vnto the same people, and at the same time, and vpon the same day. And if Almightie God himselfe saw it to be so vsefull for the Iewes to humble themselues by an ordinary fast, for their ordinary sins, and in the ordinary course of their liues; why should it be thought sinfull in Christians to humble themselues in the same manner, and vpon the same occasion? Secondly, we finde in Scriptures, that the [a] *Pharises fasted often*, and for example sake, that they [b] *fasted twice in the weeke*; and that concerning those fasts of theirs, our Lord gaue his Disciples this warning, [c] *When yee fast, bee not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance, for they disfigure their faces, that they may appeare vnto men to fast. Verily I say vnto you, they haue their reward.*

Leuit. 16. 29.

(a) Matt. 9. 14.

(b) Luk. 18. 12.

(c) Matt. 6. 16.

Out of which passages wee may gather two things. First, that these fasts of the Pharises were ordinary

ordinary fasts, and obserued by them in their ordinary course of life, and for an ordinary exercise of religion. For that these men should so often haue extraordinary occasions, especially that euery weeke twice, is a thing that cannot be conceiued with any probability or reason. Secondly, that these fasts, such as they were, were not vnlawfull in themselues. That I proue, first, because our Sauiour, where hee purposely taxeth their vices, reproueth them for their purpose, not for their practice of fasting; or not because they did fast, but because they did fast to gaine prayse of men for it. Now had they offended in both, out of doubt our Lord would haue reproued them for both, and haue fore-warned his Disciples to beware of both. Secondly, because in saying of the Pharises, that they fasting for vaine glory had their reward, hee meant that they might not expect any reward from God, seeing they did it for the applause of men: and hee implyeth by necessary consequence, that if they had not marred this good worke with so ill an end, they might haue had a reward from God for it. And if God reward ordinary fasts, what man will dare to condemne them? Thirdly, wee reade againe of *Anna* the Propheteſſe, that shee *departed not from the Temple, but serued God with fastings and prayers night and day.* In which sentence wee may consider two things for this purpose: first, that this holy woman made a dayly practice of fasting; shee serued God in this manner night and day: which sheweth, that she fasted Luke 2.37.

ordinarily, and for an ordinary exercise of deuotion. Secondly, That by this kinde of fasting she serued God. And if shee serued God by her fasting, we need not feare, lest wee dishonour him by the like practice.

Reason second from the vses.

Secondly, That ordinary fasts are lawfull and vseful, may be proued, because ordinary fasts may and doe serue for those profitable vses, for which religious fasts were ordayned. For those vses are, to testifie and helpe forward our humiliation and repentance, to sharpen and whet on our attention in holy dueties, and to subdue and tame the vnruly pride of the flesh, and such like: the respect whereof is the onely thing that maketh fasting so much commended to vs in the Scriptures. But all these holy ends and vses may be attayned or furthered no lesse by ordinary than by extraordinary fasts. For not onely our fastings, when wee keepe them for some speciall and extraordinary occasion, but euen those also which wee vse in an ordinary and vsuall course of Christianity, may tame the flesh by subtracting its food, may eleuate the minde towards God, by estranging it from the sense of worldly things, and may both shew and beget our humiliation and sorrow by chastening the body for the sinnes of our soules, as is apparent in common reason: nor is it needlesse in an ordinary course of life to vse such eyther helpes or signes of humiliation, deuotion, and mortification. For our infirmities in all these kindes are many and great, and had need of helpe euery day: and our sinnes and transgressions happen dayly,

dayly, nay hourely, and doe require euery day humiliation and sorrow: and hence it followeth, that this ordinary course of fasting vpon the common and vsuall occasions of our life, are neither needlesse nor fruitlesse.

Thus in conclusion it appeareth, that all religious Fasts, be they priuate or publike, and whether for ordinary or extraordinary occasions, haue allowance from God, and are of good vse in the life of a Christian.

Chap. III.

What holy vse there is of Fasting, and how it may further vs for holy duties, and workes of GODS seruice.

THese religious Fasts, as they haue good proofe from Gods Word, so they haue great vse in the life of a Christian. More particularly and especially they may serue for these vses.

I. They may serue as outward acts to declare our *reuerence* toward God and his sacred ordinances. For as at all times wee should vse reuerence toward God in our hearts, which is nothing else, but an *acknowledging of his excellencie, for which hee is to bee honoured*: so it is very requisite, that when wee come into his presence, or haue any

more then ordinary entercourse with him, wee should by some fitting behauiour declare it. For which purpose, [a] God commanded *Moses*, and the [b] Angell commanded *Ioshua*; *Put off thy shooes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest, is holy ground.* The meaning of which ceremonie was for this end, that thereby they might shewe reuerence in the place, where God did manifest his presence. And the like vse there may be of fasting also; and that in two respects. 1. Because, we doe by such demeanour humble our selues before the Diuine Maiestie, as vnworthy not only to enioy his presence, but to make vse of any of his creatures. Which is a testimony as of our owne basenesse, so of Gods excellencie and greatnesse. 2. We may by our abstinence shew reuerence to God, because by forbearing our meate when wee are about his workes, we declare that we preferre his seruice before the seruing of our owne turnes: as deeming it most iust, that his seruice should haue the first place in all our thoughts. This vse of fasting [c] some thinke it is not vnlikely that the Iewes made, in fasting on holy dayes till the publike Seruice was ended; and that their complaint against Christs Disciples, [d] for *rubbing the eares of corne on the Sabbath day*, doth imply so much. For their meaning was (say they) to finde fault with them for breaking not the *rest*, but the *fast* of the Sabbath; [e] which by their custome was to be obserued till dinner time, or after the Diuine Seruice. And for this interpretation there may bee giuen this reason, that the *rubbing of corne* for staying of hunger,

(a) Exod. 3. 5.
(b) Iosh. 5. 15.
(c) Hooker Eccles. polit. l. 5. nu. 72. pa. 207.
(d) Luke. 6. 1, 2.
[e] *Hebræorum illa fuit à maioribus tradita, & vsu recepta, ac tanquam lege probata consuetudo, vt non liceret diebus festis cuiquã ante sextã horã prandere.* Baron. tõ. 1. ann. 34. nu. 243. pag. 250.

hunger, was so small a worke, that in reason it cannot be thought to offend any, no not a Pharisee; it beeing lesse labour then euery man doth vse at his ordinary meale on the Sabbath day. For the furnishing of the Table, the dishing out of the meate, the drawing of drinke, and caruing that which is necessary for euery mans vse, which no Pharisee would reproue on the Sabbath day, will require as much both time & labour, as that which the Disciples here did bestow. But let this goe for a coniecture, (as I will not vrge it for any point of faith) thus much is certaine, that the Christian Church hath still bin accustomed to forbeare all foode, when they were to receiue the holy Communion, till the whole worke and seruice of God were ended: whereof [f] Saint *Augustine*, and others after him doe giue vs this reason; *vt in honorem tanti Sacramenti, in os Christiani prius Dominicum corpus intraret, quàm cateri cibi: that for the honour of that great Sacrament, our Lords bodie should first be receiued, before all other foode.* And so we may say, that it is for reuerence to GOD, and for the honour of his Ordinance; if wee first performe those holy dueties, before wee partake our necessary food. And sure it was respect vnto his Master, that made *Abrahams* seruant say, [h] *I will not eate, till I haue told mine errand.* And respect it was to his heauenly Father, that made our Sauiour to [i] refuse his owne meate, till he had done his *Fathers will, and finished his Worke.* And so it was respect vnto God, that [k] *Samuel* would not *sit downe*, till *Dauid* was sent for, that hee might anoint.

(f) Aug. Epist. 118. c. 6. pag. 191. B.

(g) Isidor. de Offic. l. 1. c. 18.

(h) Genes. 24. 33.

(i) Ioh. 4. 34.

(k) 1 Sam. 16. 11.

anoynt him, as God had appoynted. For otherwise the seruices which they did doe before meat, might, for any thing that doth appeare by the text, haue bin as conueniently performed after it. And so we shall declare our respect to God, and reuerence to his holy Ordinances, if out of deuotion, we first say our prayers in the morning, before we eate our breakefast, and first come and heare Gods Word before wee take our common foode, and first come to receiue Christs body at the Lords Table, before wee relish any worldly nourishment. For in so doing, as *Iob* professed in his words, (e) *I haue esteemed the words of his mouth more then my necessary food*: so we shall testifie by our deeds that we doe, and shall put our selues in mind that we ought to esteeme the seruice of God, and the doing of his will, and the partaking of the blessed Sacrament, more then the necessary refreshing of our own bodies. And this may shew, what respect we haue of our God, and what reuerence we beare to his Ordinances.

(e) Iob. 23. 12.

II. A second holy vse of a religious Fast may be for *mortification*, and to take downe the pride of the flesh. And when I say the *pride* of the flesh, I doe not meane vncleane lusts and vnchaste desires onely; but I meane also all vnruly and rebellious thoughts, as pride, selfe-willednes, refractarines, and all disobedience that opposeth it selfe against God and his holy Word. For fulnes of bread, and pampering of the flesh, as they doe more immediately and directly breede matter for vnchaste and fleshly lusts: so they do consequently

ly prepare a way, and dispose a man to all other sinnes, which his owne pleasure and selfe-will doe leade him vnto, and from which the awe of Gods Word and the regard of his Iudgements should withdraw him. Of the former, that is, of vnchast lusts bred by full dyet, the Lord speaketh by the Prophets mouth; (a) *When I fed them to the full, then they committed adulterie, and assembled by troupes in the harlots houses. They were as fed horses in the morning: euery one neighed after his neighbours wife.* And of the latter sort of sinnes, that is, of other vnruly and rebellious passions, bred by full feeding, *Moses* giueth proofe, when hee saith; (b) *Iesburun waxed fat and kicked. Thou art waxen fat, thou art growen thicke, thou art couered with fatnesse. Then he forsooke God that made him, and lightly esteemed the Rocke of his saluation.* Heere wee haue a grieuous, but iust complaint against this rebellious people; wherein wee may note, First, who they were that thus hee complaines against; *Iesburun*, saith the Text. The word signifieth as much as vpright; and it is the surname of *Israel*; because that people should be the most vpright of all people in the world. These were the men, that were thus faultie, and were thus complained against. Secondly, what the occasion was, that drew them into this disorder, and that is this; *They were waxen fat, growen thicke, couered with fatnes.* By which phrases, as we may vnderstand all worldly prosperity in generall, so more especially we must vnderstand plentifull dyet and full feeding; as it is more plainely declared, *verse*

(a) Ier. 5. 7, 8.

(b) Deut. 32. 15.

13, 14. Thirdly, what the sin was that they fell into, and by which they occasioned so grieuous a complaint against them; and that is thus expressed, *They kicked, they forsooke God, they lightly esteemed the Rocke of their saluation.* In which words, *Moses* vseth the same metaphore that *Ieremie* did in the place alledged; but hee extendeth the application of it further. For it is, as if hee should say; This people are as like to fed horses as may be. For as horses which prouender & high keeping doe make proud, doe kicke, and strike, and throwe downe their Rider; so this people, being pampered and fed to the full, grow stubborne against God, and contemne his Word and Ministers, and cast away his Yoke from them. Now lay all this together, and it yeeldeth vs this conclusion, That full feeding is apt to puffe vp the best men, and to make them kicke and spurne against God and all good admonitions. Which conclusion *Moses* expresseth yet more plainely in the precedent Chapter, where hee bringeth in God thus fore-telling the peoples maners: (a) *When* (saith he) *I shall haue brought them into the Land, which I sware vnto their Fathers, that floweth with milke and honey, and they shall haue eaten and filled themselues, and waxen fat; then will they turne vnto other gods, and serue them, and prouoke me, and breake my Couenant.* Where we may obserue, that fulnes and plentie is said to be the cause of idolatrie, and rebellion against God. But on the contrary side, fasting, and pinching of the body, and putting it to hardnesse, they are meanes to coole the bloud,

(a) Deut. 31. 20.

and

and tame the spirits, and pull downe the pride of the flesh. A plaine proofe hereof we haue in Saint *Paul*, who was well acquainted with Christian discipline and meanes of mortification, [a] *I* (saith he) *keepe vnder my body and bring it into subiection; lest that by any meanes when I haue preached vnto others, I my selfe should be a cast-away.* This place is well worth the noting, and that we may be directed to make the better vse of it, two things may be considered in it. 1. The discipline and practice of mortification, which the Apostle vsed toward himselfe: and of that hee saith two things. 1. *I keepe vnder my body*, or, as others reade and render the place, *contundo, contundo, I beate downe my body.* The meaning is, he vsed seuere discipline toward himselfe, fastings, and watchings, & hard lodging, and rough clothing, &c. by which hee did afflict and macerate the flesh; much vnlike to nice and tender folkes now a dayes, who cannot endure fasting, because (forsooth) it breedeth winde in the body, and will make them faintish. 2. He saith of himselfe, *I bring my body into subiection*; that is, by this kinde of Discipline that I vse, I make my flesh gentle and plyable, and ready to hearken and submit to the instructions of Gods Word, and the motions of the Spirit. And his meaning in moe words is this, that the flesh, if it be pampered and fed to the full, nay if it bee not straitly bridled, and strictly kept in, it will grow vnruly, and looke to command: but by fasting, and course cloathing, and hard labouring, hee taught it obedience & subiectiō. And to like pur-

(a) 1 Cor. 9. vlt.

pose, *Hilarion*, a religious young man, when after much abstinence and course feeding, (for barley-bread and water, with some rootes, was his vsuall foode) he felt some pricking lusts in his flesh still, [a] *he was angry with himselfe, and knocking his fist vpon his brest, Thou beast, quoth he, I will make thee leaue kicking; nor will I feede thee with barley, but with chaffe: I will pull thee downe with hunger and thirst; I will lade thee with heauie weight, and hunt thee through heate and cold, that thou maist minde meate rather then lust.* This or such like was the Discipline that Saint *Paul* vsed, which is the first thing that I noted in his words. The second thing considerable in his speech, is the reason why, or the end for which hee vndertooke so hard a course, and (as one of vs would thinke) was so vnmercifull and cruell toward himselfe; and that was, *Lest* (saith hee) *when I haue preached to others, my selfe should be a cast-away.* But what? Is there such danger in a pampered body? such perill in delicate dyet? such necessity of *beating* & *keeping vnder* the body, that without such straitnes, the soule is in danger to be lost? Yes surely, or else the blessed Apostle did speake and doe, hee knew not what, nor wherefore. The consideration whereof may yeeld vs two good meditations for our vse.

1. That the world is surely much awrie now a dayes; men be so crosse to the Apostles course. For we may see men and women seeking the markets for the best Cates, and the Vintners cellars for the best Wine, and the Confectioners shops for

[a] Iratus itaq; sibi, & pectus pugnis verberans, quasi cogitationes posset cæde manûs excludere, Ego, inquit, aselle faciã vt non calcitres; nec te hordeo alam, sed paleis: fame te conficiã & siti, graui onerabo pondere, per æstus indagabo et frigora, vt cibum potiùs quàm lasciuiam cogites. Hieron. to. 1. de vitâ Hilarionis, pag. 319. B.

for the best banketting-stuffe: (a thing not vnlawfull, if it be done moderately, and in season) but amidst all this care for pampering of the flesh; where is hee or shee that once thinketh of *beating down* the body, or taming of the flesh, or vsing any discipline of mortificatiō? Nay, would God there were not some among them who would be esteemed religious Christians, who conceit all such austerity to be Monkish, & superstitious & vngodly.

2. That all, euen the best of vs, if wee doe not thinke our selues more spirituall than Saint *Paul*, must confesse and resolue, that wee haue neede to *pull downe* by deedes of humiliation, the luxuriant pride of the flesh, and that it is a rule, deriued from the nature of man, that [c] *Mens repleta, spinas germinat libidinum, a full fed soule sprouts forth weedes of vnlawfull lusts.* Nor will this seeme any wonder, if we weigh things well. For the best ground abroad, if it haue nothing but warme showres, and faire Sun-shine all the yeere long; if there be no frost, no snow, no winter-stormes that may kil the vermin, and keepe downe the weedes: nay, if besides, there be not a Plough to cut vp the furrowes, and an harrow to breake the clods; all men know there will bee small hope of a good harueſt. Of such a piece of ground, wee may say as *Salomon* doth of [a] the *field of the sluggard, It was all growne ouer with thornes, and nettles had couered the face of it.* [b] And so we may say of the heart and soule of man, the ground where the good seed should grow, that if it haue nothing but feeding, and pampering, & ease all the weeke, and

(a) Prou. 24. 31.

b *Sicut redditum vberiorem capit, qui frequentiùs vexando exercet campum; ita maiorem gratiam percipit, qui exercet corporis sui campum sæpiùs ieiunando.* Ambros. tom. 5. Serm. 40. in feria 3. post Domin. 2. Quadrag. pag. 57. C. and in the same Sermon after; *Germinat mihi terra mea spinas, si me corporalis libidinis titillatione compungit. Generat mihi tribulos, quum me diuitiarum secularium cupiditate diserucit, &c. His ergo nisi vigilando & ieiunando carere non possumus.*

and all the yeere, and all the life long; no frost nor storme of affliction, no plough nor harrow of mortification, that may by discipline and hardnesse tame and subdue it; it will bring forth but a little good fruit of true piety and obedience: but thornes, and briers, and vermin, and weeds of vnruly lusts; these will spring, and grow apace, till they haue couered the whole face of it. Let *Pauls* practice then be euery Christians patterne. If wee would be freed from feare of being castawayes, we must keepe vnder the body, and bring it into subiection, and by wholesome discipline teach it due obedience.

III. A third vse of fasting may bee, that it will serue for *elevation* of the minde, and to make a man more attentiue about holy dueties. And this it will doe for diuers reasons and in diuers respects.

1. Because it cleareth the braine of vapors, and the body of humours, and setteth the spirits at liberty for voluntary imployments, and the vse of contemplation. For reason telleth vs, that bodily food sendeth fumes into the head, and findeth worke for the spirits, and imployeth them about the worke of nature, that they are not so free for meditation and study. And Schollers doe finde it true in experience, that times after dinner and supper are not so fit for inuention and study: and others may obserue, that in the afternoone themselues are not so fit to heare, or reade, or pray, as in the morning, when they are fasting. And consequently, in most men, especially in such as are

still

still at a full table, fasting may serue for *eleuation*, and to carry the thoughts vpward toward heauen.

2. Fasting may helpe to *eleuate* the minde, because by afflicting the body, it bringeth a man to the sense and feeling of his wants: and the sense of his wants will spurre him forward to the means that may relieue them. And so it will make men more attentiue to Gods Word, when he teacheth and admonisheth them, and more attentiue to their owne words, when they pray vnto him, and prayse him: and euer and anon to sigh towards heauen in the middest of their other cares. To giue some proofe of this; first, *Elihu* in the Book of *Iob*, speaking of the afflictions, which God layeth on his Children: *If righteous men*, (saith he) *be bound in fetters, and holden in cords of affliction; then God sheweth them their worke, and their transgressions, that they haue exceeded. Hee openeth also their eare to discipline. Iob* 36. 8, 9, 10. and *v.* 15. *Hee deliuereth the poore in his affliction, and openeth their eares in oppression.* It is, as if hee should say; In time of prosperity and peace men stoppe their eares against wholesome admonitions, and are heauy spirited: as the Prophet speaketh of Ierusalem, [a] *When it was inhabited, and was in prosperitie, they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their eares, that they should not heare: yea, they made their hearts as an Adamant stone, lest they should heare the Law.* But when the rod of God is vpon them, then by the smart which they feele, God doth vnstop their eares, and maketh them attend to euery word that may

(a) Zachar. 7. 7, 11, 12.

concerne

concerne them for their ease. And so, if we chasten our selues with our owne rodde, with fasting and hard discipline, by which wee amerce our selues for our sinnes, the sense of this smart will *open our eares* to listen, and enlarge our hearts to attend to euery word, that may help to discharge vs of this burden of sinne. Let who will marke and obserue it, and he shal find, that at such a time when affliction lyeth vpon him, whether inflicted by God, or imposed by himselfe for his sinne, that then he heareth more willingly, and vnderstandeth more clearely, and applyeth more closely to his conscience, euery word that hee heareth or readeth, than at other times hee was wont to doe. And this sheweth, that the sense of smart for our sins maketh vs attentiue to Gods Word, and gracious admonitions. Secondly, we reade againe that the Lord himselfe by the Prophet (a) Hos. 5. 15. saith of his people, (a) *In their affliction they will seeke mee earely.* Before hee had said, *I will goe, and returne to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seeke my face.* But some might say, *Till they acknowledge their offence, and seeke thy face?* Why? When (Lord) will that bee? Will this people, that haue forsaken thee, and made themselues Idols, and doe despise thy Prophets, will these men euer seeke thee? Yes, saith God, that they will: euen these men, *in their affliction*, and when the rodde is vpon them, these will *seeke mee*, and that *earely* too; that is, it will be the first and the chiefest of their cares. And so, when for our sinnes our owne hand is vpon vs, it will make

vs

vs runne vnto God, and to seeke his fauour before all the world; to get remission of those sinnes, which, our selues being Iudges, doe deserue so great correction. And this sheweth, that the sense of smart for sinne, will make vs attentiue to our prayers, and deuout in all holy duties.

Thirdly, Fasting may serue for *elleuation* of mind, because it abridgeth vs of worldly delights and comforts. For when we are most estranged from these, then are wee most ready to seeke comfort in God. For worldly pleasures, especially if there be a continuall enioying of them, they doe estrange our mindes from heauenly meditations; and that partly because they take vp the time, that should be bestowed on such thoughts; but especially because there is such an opposition betweene worldly delights and spirituall comforts, that hee who is filled with the one, cannot relish the other. And this it may seeme the Apostle meant: but sure somthing he saw, why worldly delights, though lawfull in themselues, doe yet notwithstanding hinder holy meditations, when he giueth this counsell to religious couples, that they should forbeare the company of each other *that they might giue themselues to fasting and prayer*, implying withall, that men and women are most deuoted to heauenly thoughts, when they are most estranged from worldly delights. (a) 1 Cor. 7. 5.

Fourthly, Fasting may help to *cleanse* the mind to heauenly meditations, because it doth temper and qualifie our naturall ioyes and worldly reioycings, and teacheth vs how to referre them to

their right ends. For ioyes and delights of nature, if a man ſtill giue himſelfe to the enioying of them, doe not onely preſſe downe the ſoule for the preſent, as hath beene ſaid; but they doe beſides ſo poſſeſſe the minde, and habituate (as it were) the ſoule of a man with their reliſh, that when hee hath done vſing of them, yet hee hath not done thinking on them. And this made *Quintilian* to ſay, that Students, who are giuen to ſports and tender care of their bodies, will neuer proue learned men, partly, becauſe they miſ-ſpend much time in theſe vanities, and partly becauſe, *ne ea quidem tempora idonea quæ ſuperſunt, the time which is remayning is not fit for ſtudies.* And ſo it is in reſpect of the exerciſes of religion. If we giue our ſelues ſtill to worldly, though lawfull pleaſures, they doe ſo drowne a mans ſoule, that when hee ceaſeth from them, yet hee is not fit eyther to pray with deuotion, or to heare with attention, or to doe any other holy worke with minding of what he is about. But now this holy diſcipline of faſting, if it bee holily vſed, it will helpe to moderate our pleaſures, that wee exceed not in them, and to ſeaſon and qualifie and temper them for an holy vſe: ſo that the ſame worldly delights, which make another man to wax wanton againſt Chriſt, will make this man more chearefull in Gods ſeruice, and with *David* to *dance*, when hee bringeth home the Arke of God. And as *Eliſha*, by hearing a *Minſtrell play*, was fitted to receiue heauenly reuelations, and then fell on prophecying: ſo, if by a ſeaſonable

(a) Quintil. inſtit. l. 12. cap. vlt. pag. 753.

(b) 2 King. 3. 15.

nable practice of humiliation, wee haue made our way to Gods fauour, then if wee feast and heare musicke, and vse honest recreations, euen these worldly delights will fit vs for heauenly inspirations, and lift vp our hearts to praise God with alacrity and chearefulnesse of mind. And this we may well suppose was the reason, why the Christian Church hath set *fasting* dayes before *festiuall* dayes, and appoynted abstinence to be an Vsher to our feasting, that our sorrow for sinne on the former day, might turne our mirth the day following into an holy reioycing in Gods mercies.

Thus, in diuers respects, fasting may helpe to *elevate* the soule, and kindle the fire of zeale and deuotion. And for these, or some such respects as these, [a] Saint *Basil*, and after him [b] Saint *Augustin*, do compare fasting to the *wings* of a Fowle, because as worldly delights like *bird-lime* doe entangle the soule, and depresse her thoughts vnto this earth, so abstinence like the birds wings doth make the soule to soare aloft, and carryeth her prayers into heauen. And [c] Saint *Ambrose*, speaking of *Elias* his Fast, saith of it, *Hoc gradu Elias ascendit, antequam curru, Elias went vp into heauen by this ladder of fasting, before hee ascended thither in the chariot of fire.* And the learned of this age, such as I haue had occasion to peruse, doe generally agree vpon this note, that fasting and prayer are often and vsually ioyned together in Scriptures, because they goe together in our practice, abstinence euer adding life to our prayers.

(a) Basil. de Ieiun. Homil. pag. 327.
(b) Aug. in Psal. 42. in fine.
(c) Ambr. de Elia & ieiun. cap. 3. pa. 527.

But if any man will please to make tryall in himselfe, his owne experience will be a better proofe than all sayings of other men, and all arguments that wit and reason can deuise. And I wish that eyther this or any other consideration might moue religious mindes to make tryall of this practice; that so they might be able to iudge of it out of their feeling, and not by heare-say. And if after tryall made in religious manner, they find not their attention more quicke, their deuotion more fiery, their prayers more feruent, their meditations more spirituall, and themselues, as it were, turned into other men: then they may suspect that the ancient Fathers of the Church, and the learned Writers and Preachers of our owne time, yea and the Prophets and Apostles themselues, haue with faire words perswaded men to vnnecessary paines. But if any shall seriously bend himselfe to make tryall of this counsell, hee will finde the like euent, I doubt not, that the men of Samaria did by comming to heare Christ. When the woman told them what strange things shee had found in Christ, and exhorted them, (a) *Come, see a man, which told mee all things that euer I did. Is not this the Christ?* They, giuing some credence to the womans word, went to make tryall themselues; and after tryall made, then they said to the woman; (b) *Now we beleeue, not because of thy saying: for we haue heard him our selues, and doe know that this is indeed the Christ, the Sauiour of the world.* So, if any well-minded Christian, vpon the word of so many learned Fathers & Writers,

(a) Iohn. 4. 29.

(b) vers. 42.

ters, will but in due manner begin the worke, I doubt not but after tryall he will say, *Now I beleeue* the spirituall vertues that this exercise hath, not because *Basil*, or *Chrysostome*, or *Ambrose*, or *Augustine*, or any other, eyther Father, or Doctor, or Preacher saith so, but because my selfe by experience finde and feele it to be so.

IIII. A fourth and last vse of fasting is, that it serueth for an act or helpe of *Repentance*: and that two wayes. For first it is an act, that followeth and floweth from repentance. And secondly it is an act, that breedeth or increaseth our repentance. And in both these respects, it may well be esteemed as a necessary companion that goeth along with repentance. For in the one respect it is as a *follower*, that commeth after and waiteth vpon it. And in the other, it is as an *vsher*, that goeth before and maketh way for it.

1. First, it is a necessary companion to follow after and waite vpon repentance: and thus it is necessary in two respects. 1. That our sorrow may be answerable to our sinne. For we sinne, not in inward desires only, but in outward both speeches and actions: or wee sinne in thought, word and deede. And reason requireth, that the plaister should be as large as the sore, and so, that repentance should spread it selfe as farre as the offence hath done. This the *Ninenites* obserued in their repentance. They *put on haire-cloth*, and *fasted*, & *sate downe in ashes*. By which *behauiour of theirs, they seemed to intend thus much*, (saith a Reuerend and learned Writer) *We acknowledge before thy Maiestie*, 36. page 489.

(a) D. King on Ionas, Lecture

(a) Ioh. 15. 13.

(b) Matth. 12. 41.

Maiestie (Lord of Hosts) we the vnworthiest creatures that euer thy hands haue formed, viler then the sackcloth we weare (for if there had beene baser stuffe in the world, we would not haue refused it,) and fouler then the ashes wee are besprent with: Wee acknowledge that thou art a righteous God, and wee an vnrighteous Nation, not worthy our meate, drinke, cloathing, or any other benefits, &c. And in acknowledgement thereof, as guiltie within our selues, Whatsoeuer thou hast giuen vs to enioy for comfort, for pleasure, for seruice, or any other vse, eyther in our families at home, or in our foulds and stalls abroad, wee resigne it into thy hands, as hauing no right vnto it; we lay it downe at the feete of thy iustice, and only for thine own sake beseech thee to shew mercy. In this maner their repentance, as it first sprung in the heart, so it sprouted and shewed it selfe in the gestures of the body. And so must ours do; or else the plaister will be too little for the wound. Secondly, fasting is necessary, as a follower of our repentāce, that our outward humiliation may prooue the truth of our inward sorrow. For the heart is vsed to expresse his inward affections by outward actions; as it expresseth his vncleane thoughts by wanton lookes and vnchaste gestures, and vnsauourie speeches; and his ioy and inward reioycing, by singing & dancing, and a cheerefull countenance. And this made *Salomon* to say, (a) *A merrie heart maketh a cheerefull countenance*: And our Sauiour to say, (b) *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.* And I may adde by the like reason, Yea, and the *eye looketh*, and the *eare heareth*, and

(a) Prou. 15. 13.

(b) Matth. 12. 34.

and the *feete walke*, and the *hands worke*. And hence it followeth, that if sorrow and repentance be in the heart, they will appeare and shew themselues by the body: and the acts and behauiour of the body, by which repentance and sorrow are shewed, are weeping and mourning, and fasting, and forbearing of the comforts of nature, and the delights of the world. This we finde true in dayly experience, that sorrow, whatsoeuer the cause be, if it be great, it will not let a man *eate*; & if it be but moderate, yet it chooseth not to *eate*. Thus *Ahab*, when he was denyed *Naboths* Vineyard, (a) *layed him downe vpon his bed, and would eate no bread*. And *Hannah*, when she was vpbraided by her aduersary, (b) *she wept, and did not eate*. And *Saul*, when he had ill newes propheſied vnto him, of his owne death, and the death of his Sonnes, together with the ouerthrow of the people, though they intreated him, yet he put it off, and said, (c) *I will not eate*. And *Plutarch* saith of *Cæsar*, that being told of violating of the Law which himself had made, (d) *it so repented him, that hee refused his supper*. Thus sorrow for worldly respects enioyneth abstinence from food. And so it doth when it is for sinne. *Dauid* saith of himselfe, (e) *My heart is smitten and withered like grasse, so that I forget to eate my bread*. The meaning is, that sorrow so possessed his heart, that he had no minde of his meate. And (f) the Prophet taught the people to shew their repentance, *by fasting, and weeping, and mourning*. And nature taught the (g) *Ninevites* to doe the like. And from hence Saint *Basil* saith, *Repentance, with-*

(a) 1. King. 21. 4.

(b) 1. Sam. 1. 7.

(c) 1. Sam. 28. 23.

(d) *Adeo pœnituit, vt illo die cœnam recusaret.* Plut. apoph. in August. Cæs.

(e) Psal. 102. 4.

(f) Ioel. 2. 12. Ionas 3. 5, 6, 7.

(g) Θεὸς ἀνοσιωτάτοις ἐπιτιμίοις ἐχρήσατο. Basil. de Ieiun. Hom. 1. pag. 323. A.

without fasting is idle. The meaning is, that as S. *Iames* saith, *Faith without workes is dead*, i. it is no true faith, if it bring forth no fruites: so if repentance do not bring forth fruites of repentance, fasting and mourning and humiliation, it may be feared, lest it bee a dead and fruitlesse repentance. And this made our Lord to say of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, that they would haue (a) *repented, sitting in sack-cloth and ashes*: meaning that they would haue repented seriously and vnfaignedly. And sure no man among ys would thinke that that woman did truely sorrow for her husbands death, that would thinke it too much to weare a mourning gowne and a blacke paire of gloues at his funerall. And as great reason there is, to thinke that he doth not greatly sorrow for sinne, that will neuer fast and chasten himselfe for sinne.

(a) Luk. 10. 13.

And if this be so, how great cause haue wee to bee sorry, that wee haue shewed so little sorrow, and to repent that we haue expressed so little repentance hitherto? Surely, if wee must try the tree by its fruite, and iudge of our repenting by our fasting, wee shall finde but little store of this vertue in the world: so that we may iustly complaine, as sometime an eloquent and learned Preacher did: *Where is the Repentance of our times? Whither is it fled? Where hath it hid her selfe? &c. It is not for the Angels to repent, because they sinne not. Nor for the Deuils of hell, for their iudgement is sealed. It is onely for the sonnes of men, and wee onely know it not. The people of Nineueh sinned, and would not eate, sinned, and would not drinke, sinned,*

D. King on Ionas, Lecture 36. page 491.

and

and would not be cloathed; nay, sinned, and would not giue leaue to their beasts to feede: we sinne, and yet we eate; nay, we sinne in eating, &c. we sinne, and yet we drinke; nay, we sinne in drinking, &c. and we sinne, and cloath our selues; or rather we cloath our selues, and sinne by cloathing vs, &c. But if any man notwithstanding all this, can perswade himselfe that he may repent well inough within in his heart, though he shew it not without by deedes of the body; I will onely reply vpon him, as Saint *Iames* did in a like case. *Shew me thy faith by thy workes*, saith he. And so say I, *Shew* me thy *repentance* by thy *workes*: or if thou canst not shew it, I am not bound to beleeue it. And this shall suffice to shew how fasting doth follow and flowe from Repentance.

2. Secondly, fasting is necessary to repentance, as an Vsher that goeth before it, and maketh way for it; I meane, because it is a meanes to beget and increase it. And surely, the lesse vse we haue made of it in the former respect, as a fruit springing out of our repentance; the more need we haue of it in this latter, that it may bee a helper to forward our repentance. And that it may doe two wayes, or for two causes.

1. Because the outward acts and behauiour of the body, as they come first from the heart, so they reflect vpon the heart againe, and there they doe increase and confirme that affection, from which they sprang. This Saint *Augustine* obserued long agoe in the outward gestures of prayer. When a *man prayeth* (saith he) and *kneeleth him downe*

[a] *Orantes, de membris sui corporis faciunt, quod supplicantibus conuruit, quum genua figunt, quum extendunt manus, &c.* Aug. tom. 4. de cura pro mort. cap 5. pag. 257. A.

downe vpon his knees, and spreadeth his hands toward heauen; he vseth that gesture of body, which becommeth a suppliant to vse in his prayers. And hee addeth, *I know not how*, but so it is, that these motions of the body, as they had their first beeing from the affection of the soule, so they doe againe stirre vp the affection that bred them; *ac per hos conatus effectus, qui vt fierent ista præcessit, quia facta sunt, crescit*; *and hereby the affection of the heart that caused them, is afterward increased by them.* For deuotion in the heart doth cast downe the body on the earth, and lifteth vp the hands and eyes toward heauen: and this prostration of the body, and eleuation of the hands and eyes, doe blowe the coales of deuotion, and maketh them burne the more brightly. And so, it is repentance in the heart, that maketh men to exercise discipline vpon the body: but this outward discipline in fasting, and watching, and hard lodging, they confirme & increase the repentance from whence they came. For if the minde should relent, and begin to forget what it is about, (as *nihil facilius marescit quàm lachryma*; sorrow for sinne doth soone begin to cease) yet these visible signes will euer and anon be calling it backe againe, and bring to remembrance the former thoughts. Adde hereto, that euery vertue or habit of the soule, the more it exerciseth it selfe by outward deeds, the stronger it groweth: for confirmed habits are bred by often iterated actions.

(a) Quintilian. Instit. l. 6. c. 1. pag. 345.

2. Fasting may breede or increase repentance, because it is a penall chastisement, which the penitent

nitent doth inflict on himselfe, and by which he doth chasten, and, as it were, amerce himselfe for his folly: for the vse of corrections and punishments is this, that *as all offences doe vse to seduce by pleasing; so all punishments endeauour by vexing to reforme transgressions.* And for this cause it is, that when God would reclaime men, he layeth his rod vpon them, and so bringeth them backe by weeping Crosse. Proofes are many, but take one instance for all. When *Ionas* was sent to *Nineueh*, he turned his backe, and fled to *Tarshish* a contrarie way; and so long as wind and tide serued him, he went on with full sayle: but when God had sent his messenger to apprehend him, a tempestuous storme, and a raging sea, and by this meanes had cast him into the deepe, and clozed him in a Fishes bellie, as in a prison-house; then *Ionas* relented, and amended, and prayed for mercy, and went the right way whither hee was sent. Vpon which passage [b] St. *Hierom* speaking in Gods person, giueth vs this note; *Fugerat animosus Propheta, sed in profundo maris meus fuit: The stomachfull Prophet, like a fugitiue seruant, ran away from me; but in the bottome of the sea I caught him,* and he became a good seruant euer after. And as GOD by making men to smart, doth also make them to repent: so if we by fasting and other penall inflictions, doe amerce and chasten our selues for our sinnes, this correction also may serue to reforme vs. Nay in some sense I may say, that the chastisemēts which we inflict vpon our selues, are most times more effectuall then those which God

(a) Hooker. Eccles. Polit. l. 5. nu. 72. pa. 213.

(b) Ep. 25. pag. 203. C.

doth lay vpon vs, partly becauſe our ſelues doe know more diſtinctly why and wherefore we ſuffer, and eſpecially becauſe wee are by our owne thoughts afore-hand, prepared to receiue the correction before we feele it: which helps in Gods corrections are moſt times wanting vnto vs. And from hence Saint *Baſil* commendeth faſting, as being [a] φάρμακον ἁμαρτίας ἀναιρετικόν, *a medicine that taketh away the maladie of ſinne*. Which point he yet declareth further by a moſt liuely ſimilitude.

(a) De Ieiun. Hom. 1. pa. 321.

[b] *As wormes* (ſaith he) *which are bred in childrens entralls, are expelled by worme-wood, and bitter medicines*: ſo if ſinne bee engendred in a mans ſoule, there is no ſpeedier way to expell it, then by letting downe this bitter potion of faſting and humiliation. And to like purpoſe Saint *Ambroſe*, [c] *Delicate fare* and pampering of the bodie, (ſaith he) *is pleaſing to* nature, and *faſting* is as *vnpleaſing*: but things which are moſt pleaſant to the taſte, are not alwayes moſt profitable for health. Nay, *Corpora dulcibus frequenter inflantur*; *ſweet things doe puffe vp the body*: *& melle iecur tenditur*; *and the eating of honey maketh the liuer to ſwell*: *but bitter things doe bring it to its temper againe*. And ſo it is in the gouernment of the ſoule. Pleaſant meats and full feeding puffe vp and ſwell the fleſh; but abſtinence taketh it downe, and bringeth it to a right diſpoſition and temper. In regard of all which, as alſo out of the experience that my ſelfe haue had, I dare bee bold to ſay, that whoſoeuer ſhall make triall of this courſe, ſhall finde the like effect, when he humbleth himſelfe by faſting, that *Dauid*

[b] *Quemadmodũ vermes, qui in puerorum inteſtinis germinant, pharmacis quibuſdã acribus et amaris excutiuntur: ita peccatum, &c.* ibid.

[c] *Dulcis voluptas videtur, amatum ieunium. Hoc amaro illud dulce tollatur, &c.* Ambroſ. de Elia & Ieiun. ca. 11. pag. 533.

Dauid did, when God humbled him by his correction. *Dauid* saith of himselfe, *It is good for me that I haue beene afflicted, that I might learne thy Statutes.* Vpon which words, Saint *Augustine* commenteth in this manner, (a) *Didicerã elatus iniquitates meas, discam humiliatus iustificationes tuas: When I was lifted vp in prosperity, I learned to obey mine owne lusts, but now beeing once humbled, I shall learne to obey thy Lawes.* And so the contrite soule, that hath chastened himselfe by this discipline, may haue iust occasion, I am perswaded, to say after tryall; It is good for mee that I haue beene thus afflicted for my sinnes. For by this holy reuenge vpon my selfe, I shall learne to serue my God better. Psal. 119. 71.

(a) August. in Psalm. 42. pag. 139. C.

Thus I haue declared the holy vses of this discipline, such as I could thinke on for the present. Others, that are not strangers from this exercise, may peraduẽture either adde mo, or enlarge these. In the meane time, it will not be vnseasonable to aduertise the Reader of two things concerning the premises.

1. If any man haue need of these, or any of these helpes and vses, then hee may not say or thinke that an holy Fast is superfluous and needlesse for him. For example, if hee finde that hee hath any disordered lusts or fleshly thoughts that are not wholly subdued and tamed; but that eyther they prouoke him to euill, or hinder him from that which is good: then he may make vse of fasting, because it will serue him to *beat downe* his body, and to bring it into subiection, that hee

may serue God the more freely. Or, if hee finde that his prayers and meditations, and other diuine exercises bee not wholly spirituall, without all mixture or fainting; then hee may make vse of fasting, because it will serue to *eleuate* his thoughts, and to carry his prayers with full wing into heauen. And lastly, if hee finde that hee haue any sinnes not fully sorrowed for, and wholly done away, but that hee hath need of some more repentance; then hee may make vse of fasting, because it will serue him to *humble* his soule, and to increase godly *sorrow*, that hee may obtaine pardon. But if any man be so spirituall, and so perfect, and so past all frailty of mankinde, that hee neyther needes any more mortifying of his flesh, nor any more sharpning of his deuotion, nor any more repentance for his sinne: I will not say that such a man hath any further need of fasting. No, nor can I say, that hee hath any more neede of Christ, or his death and bloud-shed. For he that is so perfect, what more neede hath hee of a Sauiour? But one thing I dare and will say, that God doth accept, and Iesus Christ doth acknowledge, and the holy Angels doe reioyce more for one sinner, that by fasting and mourning doth repent for his sinnes, than ninety and nine of the most perfect men in the world, that thinke they haue no need of repentance.

a. If any man shall please to make tryall of this exercise, and after his fasting doe not finde these holy vses of it; then hee should examine himselfe how hee carryed and demeaned himselfe in

the

the performance of this seruice: whether he haue not erred in the manner, or swarued from the right end, or neglected some necessary and substantiall condition, that is required for this purpose. And if after due examination it doe appeare, that he haue not miscarried in some weighty and materiall poynt, I will not say nay, but hee may condemne mee for being too lauish in commending the vertues of this worke. But if it doe appeare, that he haue so erred, then let him blame himselfe that it hath succeeded no better. For the Pharises fasted to an ill end, and lost their reward: and the Iewes fasted in an ill manner, and were reproued for their labour. And so if any Christian erre in the same or the like sort, hee may not thinke by such a fast to obtaine Gods fauour, or to purchase the blessings already spoken of. Now if any shall aske, as perhaps some will, what those necessary conditions be, that by fulfilling of them, hee may attaine the promises annexed to them; this question I shall labour, God willing, to satisfie, in the next ensuing Chapter.

CHAP.

Chap. IIII.

What conditions are required of vs in our fasting, that it may be accepted with God.

FAsting hath many good vses in Religion, as hath beene already said. But it is not euery Fast that hath these vertues, nor euery Fast that can cómend vs to God. For, as I began to say, we reade of some mens Fasts that haue beene like themselues, and both of them abominable. [a] *The Ninevites fasted, and obtayned mercy,* saith Saint *Chrysostome*, *but the Iewes fasted, and gayned reproofe* for their paynes. Therefore that we may learne how to fast, that so we may please God, and not both punish our bodies, and not profit our soules; it will be necessary in the next place, to consider what things are required of vs, when wee doe fast, that we may profit by it.

[a] *Ieiunauerunt Ninevitæ, & Dei misericordiâ elicuerunt: ieiunauerunt & Iudæi & nihil profecerunt, sed culpati abierunt. Igitur ieiunij leges discamus, ne in incertum curramus, &c.* Chrys. Homil. 3. ad pop. Antioch. pag 49.

I. Firſt then it is required in our fasting, that it be a *moderate afflicting* of our selues. I say two things. 1. That there must be a kinde of *affliction* and chastening in it. 2. That this chastening must be *moderate*, and within compasse.

1. That there must be a kinde of *afflicting* in our fasting. And so the Scriptures say. For the Lord himselfe speaking of the yeerely fast which he had appoynted, saith of it, [b] *In the seuenth moneth,*

(b) Leuit. 16. 29, 31.

neth, on the tenth day of the moneth, yee shall afflict your soules by a statute for euer, and [a] whatsoeuer soule it be, that shall not be afflicted that day, he shall be cut off from among this people. And the Angell saith of *Daniels* fast; [b] *When thou didst set thy heart to chasten thy selfe before thy God.* And *Dauid* saith of his owne fasting, [c] *I humbled* [*or afflicted*] *my soule with fasting.* And the people of the Iewes, [d] *Wherefore*, say they, *haue wee fasted, and thou seest not? Wherefore haue we afflicted our soule, and thou takest no knowledge?* But most plaine to this purpose is that of *Ezrah*; [e] *I proclaymed a Fast*, saith hee, *that wee might afflict our selues before our God.* Where wee may note, that the *afflicting* of our selues is the very end of our fasting. Thus, in the language of the holy Ghost, fasting doth imply a kinde of *afflicting*. And indeed if it be rightly vsed, it may be said to *afflict* a man for three respects. First, because it doth naturally breed a kinde of paine to the body. For, when nature wanteth her ordinary nourishment, she feedeth vpon the body it selfe, and sucketh and draweth from it its naturall moysture, and consumeth the iuyce of it. Which action of nature vpon it selfe, if it be long and great, doth breed vnsufferable paynes, which maketh men to eat their owne flesh, rather than endure it: and if it be but moderate, yet if it be continued aboue the ordinary and fit time of refreshing, it will more or lesse breed some sence of paine. Secondly, fasting may be said to *afflict*, because it depriueth a man of his vsuall and accustomed refreshing and

(a) Leuit. 23. 29.
(b) Dan. 10. 12.
(c) Psal. 35. 13.
(d) Is. 58. 3.
(e) Ezr. 8. 21.

comfort. And that without any reall and positiue payne, is a kinde of affliction to nature. For if a man that hath beene in place of authority and respect, be onely depriued of this honour and dignity, that priuation alone will be a corrasiue to his soule. And if a man that hath beene accustomed to liue at his liberty, be commanded to keepe his house, though hee lodge as soft, and fare as well, and be attended as carefully as euer he was wont; yet this restraint in his owne house will be a punishment vnto him, because it is an abridging of his wonted liberty. And so abstinence from meat at the vsuall time, is an *affliction* to nature, because shee misseth her wonted comfort and refreshing. Thirdly, fasting may further be said to *afflict*, because it is a memoriall, that representeth vnto vs the iust causes of the greatest sorrow. For as when a wife weareth mourning weeds for her Husbands death, if any other occasion should draw her to sporting and mirth; yet the sight of her owne clothes would re-call her, because they are testimonies that put her in minde of her husbands decease, and her owne widdow-hood: so our fasting, being vndertaken for humiliation and repentance, is an outward token that calleth our sinnes to remembrance, that telleth vs how vnworthy we are of the least of Gods mercies, and how obnoxious to damnation, if by repentance wee doe not obtaine pardon. In which case, though wee should otherwise forget our selues, yet the very want of our wonted food will cause a sight, and breed a sense of our wofull estate.

And

And this is thought to bee one reason, why the Ninevites caused their children and cattell to fast from all food, who notwithstanding were neither guilty of the sin, nor capable of repentance; because the ruefull sight of their miseries, and the mourning sound of their cry, might serue to increase the Ninevites sorrow, whose sinnes had beene the cause of all. Thus fasting is in diuers respects a kinde of *affliction*, and in the religious vse of it, was intended by Almighty God for that purpose.

2. The second thing is, that this chastening must be *moderate*, and not exceed the proportion of euery mans strength and ability. And then it exceedeth this proportion, when it eyther destroyeth nature, or disableth a man for Gods seruice, and the dueties of his calling. And thus far if a man goe, he goeth beyond the rule of a religious fast. The reasons are: First, God doth not desire the hurt of his creature, while hee is about his seruice: nay, hee will rather forbeare some part of his seruice, than an Oxe or an Asse shall want necessary food, as is euident by our Sauiours own words related by the Euangelist [a]. And if he will not haue a beast to want food, much lesse would he haue a man to endanger his life or health for such an exercise, though tending to his seruice. And therefore if any deny necessary refreshing to the body, when need doth require, that they may vse the more austerity against the flesh, [b] *Let them heare* (saith the Canon Law) *what God saith by the Prophet* [c]: *I the Lord loue iudge-*

(a) Luke 13. 15. & 14. 5.

(b) *Audiant qui ea, quæ necessaria sunt corpori, subtrahūt, illud quod per Prophetam Dominus loquitur*; Ego Dominus odio habens rapinam holocaustorū. *De rapina verò holocaustum offert, qui temporalium bonorum siue ciborum nimiâ egestate, vel manducandi, vel somni penuriâ corpus suum immoderatè affligit.* De Consecrat. distinct. 5. cap. 24. Non mediocriter.

c Isa. 61. 8.

iudgement, I hate robbery for burnt offering. Now hee offereth God an offering of robbery, saith the Canon, *that defraudeth his body of necessary food* for religions sake. And let such a one take with him also, the rule of Saint *Ambrose*, [a *Satis diu ieiunat, qui cum Christi voluntate se reficit*;] *He fasteth long enough, that breaketh Fast with Christs liking and approbation.* Secondly, Fasting is appoynted of God for an helpe, that may enable vs to serue God the better, as to make the flesh seruiceable to the soule, to lift vp the minde in holy and heauenly meditations, and to further our repentance and obedience, as hath beene formerly declared. But when it exceedeth the proportion of a mans strength, as it casteth downe the body, so it disableth the soule also. For b *experience telleth vs*, saith Saint *Hierome*, [*Asellum in via, quum lassus fuerit, diuerticula quærere*;] *that a beast when it is ouer-laden, and wearied, will turne aside at euery corner*, and euer and anon seeketh how to lye downe vnder the burden. And so if the body be ouer-burdened and enfeebled with too-much abstinence, it cannot be seruiceable to the soule, nor affoord her strength & spirits for holy exercises, but will euer be ready to sleepe, or rest, or faint; so that the soule at such times cannot heare, nor reade, nor pray, nor meditate, as at other times she is vsed to doe. And for this cause the Apostle giueth *Timothy* this rule, c *Drinke no longer water, but vse a little wine for thy stomachs sake, and thine often infirmities.* And Saint *Hierome* giueth the like counsell to a religious friend of his;

(a) Ambros. ser. 31. p. 44. G.

(b) Epist. 7. ad Lætam. pag. 59. F.

(c) 1 Tim. 5. 23.

a You

[a] *You should so fast,* (saith he) *that you doe not faint, and breathe short, and haue neede of some body to beare you vp for falling: but that subduing the bodily appetite, you do not diminish spirituall exercises, nor reade or sing, or watch or pray lesse then you are wont. For Fasting is not a perfect vertue,* to bee desired for it selfe; but an *helpe and ground of other vertues.* The want of this moderatiõ *Ionathã* did rightly reproue in *Saul* his father, who by enioyning too strait abstinence, did hinder the people in the pursuit of the enemies. [b] *My Father hath troubled the Land. See I pray you, how mine eyes haue bin enlightened, because I tasted a little of this honey: How much more, if the people had eaten freely to day of the spoile of their enemies, which they found? For had there not bin now a much greater slaughter among the Philistines?* And so by the same reason, if any man doe exceed measure in his religious abstinence, we may say of him, Hee *troubleth* his soule, and hindreth the worke of Religion, and maketh himselfe vnable to doe good duties. But this Caueat was necessary in times past; now a dayes few men offend that way. And therfore I will presse this poynt no further. Only out of the former part of this Note, where I shewed that fasting is an *Afflicting*, I will draw some short conclusions for our further vse.

[a] *Sic debes ieiunare, vt non palpites, & respirare vix possis, & comitum tuarum vel porteris, vel traharis manibus: sed vt fracto corporis appetitu, nec in lectione, nec in Psalmis, nec in vigilijs solito quid minus facias. Ieiuniũ non perfecta virtus, sed cæterarum virtutum fundamentũ est,* &c. Hieron. ad Demetriad. Ep. 8. pag. 72. C

(b) 1. Sam. 14. 29.

1. *Concl.* If a true Fast bee a chastening of the body, then Papists haue little cause for their great outcryes, and much boasting of their Fasts. For as the Pharises said to Christ, [c] *Why doe the Disciples of Iohn & of the Pharises fast often, but thine eate and drinke?* so the Pharises of our time say, that

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(c) Mark. 2. 18. Luk. 5. 33.

they and their disciples fast often; but Protestants and their Schollers eate and drinke, and feast. But all this lowd cry is but an empty sound. For say, they fast often, as they call fasting; yet what is it that they call a Fast, and which they enioyne their disciples to vse? Why? it is (forsooth) that at dinner they eate no flesh, and that at supper they make not a set and standing meale. But at dinner they may take their fill of the best fish, and the strongest wines, and the daintiest iunkets, and what they will beside of rootes and white-meats, or any such like. And at night, they may haue a drinking, and eate something beside, more or lesse, according to the custome of the place and people. And they may drinke at any time of the day, and any drinke they list. Yea, and (which is abominable to conceiue) if a man drinke intemperately, and be drunke on their fasting day, yet if hee obserue the former rules, [a] *hee offendeth not against the Law of their Fast*. This is the strictnes and hard discipline that the Church of *Rome* doth lay vpon her children in their frequent and meritorious Fasts. Nor may we thinke, that the practice can be much better then their precepts are. Sure I reade, that [b] the Princes of *Germanie* at the times of *their publike meetings in the Empire, were wont to obserue the knowne fasting-dayes of the* Church, *and then they would goe dyne with the Bishops*. For (as they vsed to say) *they neuer had greater variety of good cheere, nor more dainties, then at such times*. But some perhaps may say, that he that reporteth this, was an aduersary to their Church. Be it so: yet

[a] *Contra temperantiam peccatū erit, contra ieiunium non item.* Azor. par. 1. l. 7. ca. 10. q. 7.

(b) Polyc. Lyserus præfat. præfixâ Hassenmull. de ieiunio Iesuit.

yet that is no reason to discredit the report of a thing so openly knowne. And though *Lyserus*, who reporteth this from the Princes mouthes, were an aduersary, yet *Lindanus* was their friend, and he saith no lesse of their loose fastings. [a] *That our Fasts* (saith he) *which swimme with store of wine, and abound with superfluities, and outstrip the delicates of flesh, with variety of fish; (insomuch that they may seem to dallie with God; while for cutting off the warmth that is caused by eggs, they cramme into their gluttonous stomach the flames of oyle, the burning heate of wine, and the fire of all kinde of spices) were not only vnknowne to the ancient Christians, but were intolerable and abominable, is a thing more euident to them that consider the ancient customes, then that we should waste words about it.* And in the margin he addeth this note; [b] *The Fasts of Catholikes all abroad like the feeding of Epicures.* And this may serue to shew what sore penance our popish people doe vndergoe, by their often fasting. But if a true Fast be an afflicting of the body, as I haue proued, and themselues will not deny; then though they haue many Fasts in name, yet they haue few or none in deed. Let them then looke homeward, & reforme these mock-fasts of their own Church, and then let them complaine of the rare Fasts in ours.

[a] Ieiunia nostra quæ et vini copia natant, abundantiâ redundant, et piscium varietate carnium superant delitias, adeoq; cum Deo ludere videntur, dum pro intercepto, qui ex ouis oritur calore, oleï flammas, vini æstum, omnisq; aromatũ generis ignes, bellùm infaciunt stomacho; veteribus Christianis omnino fuisse non modo incognita, sed et intolerabilia atq; adeò abominanda, pijs omnibus vetera cogitantibus arbitramur notius, quàm vt ea de re, vlla sint verba profunden da. Lindan. Panop. lib. 3. cap. 11. pa. 89.

[b] Ieiunium Catholicorũ passim Epicureũ.

2. *Concl.* They make but a friuolous excuse, who to free themselues from fasting, alledge that they finde hurt by it; meaning that it is some paine to endure two or three houres hunger, and some trouble to passe ouer the vsuall time of refection.

fection. Some paine, and some trouble? Why? that is the very cause why we should fast, that by chastening the body wee may cherish the soule. Nor is it so great a matter now and then to endure such a paine. For we reade that *Esau* was so long in hunting, that he fainted, and was ready to dye for hunger, [a] as himselfe complained. And we may see it now among men, that if it bee for pleasure to follow our sports, or for profit to increase our wealth, or for preferment to aduance our estates; there is no man but would finde himselfe able inough to forbeare a meales meate. And if the saving of our soules bee as deare vnto vs, as these worldly vanities, we will not repine at so small a labour in so necessary a case.

(a) Gen. 25. 29, 30, 32.

3. *Concl.* They be poore fasters, who glut themselues aforehand, that so they may fast with full stomachs. Saint *Basil* met with some such in his dayes, whom he warneth and threatneth for it. *Praua est cogitatio, &c.* It is a graceless thought, (saith he) to say with our selues, [b] *Now the fasting dayes are bidden,* νῦν ἐστὶν ἐπὶ θύραις τὰ μεθύσια καὶ κῶμοι· *Let vs therefore now drowne our selues in swilling & excesse.* For will any man (saith he) *when he is to marry a chaste Matrone,* make an introduction to such a marriage, by *bringing Strumpets into his house?* And in the places of Popish ignorance, it is a most vsuall practice, to make way for Lent Fast, by surfeting at Shroue-tide. But a religious Christian should consider, that if he meane to fast rightly, he must make his abstinence to be a chastening to nature, which cannot be, if his fasting

(b) Hom. 2. de Ieiun. pag. 336. A.

[a] *Coniungitur per crapulam & lasciuiam, vlcisci dies ieiunij, quasiq; de ieiunio venturo sumere pœnas.* Filesa. de Quadrag. cap. 12. pag. 470.

be

be but a forbearing of meate, till his former glutonie be concocted.

II. Secondly, there is required in a true Fast, that our other carriage and behauiour be suteable to this of our fasting. My meaning is, that as wee chasten and afflict the body by abstinence from meate, so we should doe by refraining from the other delights and comforts of nature. For else the other pleasure would vndoe that, which by fasting we seeke to effect; becausse they will hinder our humiliation and repentance. Nor is it seemely to ioyne gay clothes, and sweet perfumes, and pleasant musicke, and frolike behauiour with this exercise of humiliation and sorrow, no more then it is for him that weareth a mourning gowne for his friends death, to flaunt it in a white hat, and a gay feather, and a coloured suite at the same time. And for this cause it is, that in Scriptures, where fasting is spoken of, there is mention also of sackcloth and ashes, and hard lodging, and forbearing of perfumes. As for example, [a] *Daniel* forbore sweet *oyntments*. And [b] *Dauid lay all night vpon the earth*. And [c] *Mordecai put on sackcloth*, and besprent himselfe *with ashes*: And the [d] King of *Nineueh layed off his robe, and couered* himselfe *with sack-cloth, and sate in ashes*. And [e] *Ioel* requireth, *Let the Bridegroome goe foorth of his Chamber, and the Bride out of her Closet*. And our [f] Lord saith, *The children of the Bride-chamber cannot fast, while the Bridegroome is with them*. The meaning is, that Marriage-mirth is vnseasonable in a time of fasting. And therefore if a Fast must be kept, let the

(a) Dan. 10. 3.
(b) 2. Sam. 12. 16.
(c) Ester 4. 1.
(d) Ionas 3. 6.
(e) Ioel 2. 16.
(f) Mar. 2. 19. Luk. 5. 34.

Bridegroome goe foorth of his wedding Chamber; as *Ioel* speaketh: or if Marriage-mirth bee necessary, let the humiliation of fasting be deferred till an other time; as our Sauiour implyeth. And because of this disproportion between mirth and fasting, God reiecteth the Fast of the Iewes for this cause among others, because *in the day of their Fast they found pleasure.* And from the consideration of these things it is, that the Hebrewes were wont in their Fasts [a] to abstaine from foure things, that import mirth and reioycing; from *washing themselues, from anoynting, from fine apparell,* and from the *vse of the marriage bed.* And so, when wee fast, all our behauiour must bee such as beseeme mourning, & the condition of a deiected suppliant. [b] At least thus much is necessary, that we abstaine from all delights of the world, that be disproportionable to the state of a mournfull penitent.

(a) Ainsw. on Leu. 16. 29.

[b] *An putatis illũ ieiunare, qui primo diluculo non ad Ecclesiam vigilat, sed surgens congregat seruulos, disponit vetia, canes producit, saltus syluasq; perlustrat?* Ambros. to. 5. ser. 42. pag. 58. v. Aug. de Diuers. Ser. 74. cap. 8.

III. Thirdly, there is required in a true Fast, that the inward affection of the heart be answerable to the outward behauiour of the body: that is, that as by abstaining from the comforts of this life, we chasten the body, so by a godly sorrow and vnfained repentance, we humble our soules for our sinnes. And because true repentance includeth or implyeth amendment of life, and an heartie practice of all good duties; therfore it is to be vnderstood, that with a true Fast there is necessarily required an holy life. And the reason hereof is plaine, because God doth not care for the *opus operatum, the bare worke done*: nor doth fasting

please

pleaſe him, becauſe it is an abſtinence from meat; but becauſe it is a ſigne of repentance, and an help to true deuotion and an holy life. To this purpoſe we finde God ſpeaking to the Iewes: [a] *When ye faſted and mourned in the fifth and in the ſeuenth moneth, did ye at all faſt vnto mee? euen to mee?* As if he ſhould ſay, *Ye did it not for my ſake*, and I owe you no thankes for it, nor doe I take it as a part of my ſeruice. But why was it not done for Gods ſake, and to his ſeruice? The reaſon is intimated in the words following, [b] *The Lord ſaid, Execute true iudgement, and ſhew mercy and compaſſion, euery man to his brother, and oppreſſe not the widdow, &c. But they refuſed to hearken, and pulled away the ſhoulder, &c.* And to like purpoſe, but more plainely, in another place: [c] *Yee faſt* (ſaith God) *for ſtrife and debate, and to ſmite with the fiſt of wickednes. Ye ſhall not faſt as ye doe this day, to make your voyce to be heard on high. Is it ſuch a Faſt, that I haue choſen? Wilt thou call this a Faſt, and an acceptable day to the Lord?* Hee meaneth, that they faſted, as if they repented for their ſinne, and meant to ſerue God; but they, while they kept their Faſt, continued in their ſinnes; and that this was not a true Faſt, that God euer did require, or would accept. But if this bee not the true Faſt, what then is? Why? It followeth in the next words, [d] *Is not this the Faſt that I haue choſen, to looſe the bands of wickednes, to vndoe the heauie burdens, and to let the oppreſſed goe free, & that ye breake euery yoke? Is it not to deale thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poore that are caſt out, to thy houſe?*

(a) Zach. 7. 5.

(b) verſ. 9, 10, 11, 12.

(c) Iſa. 58. 4.

(d) verſ. 6, 7.

house? When thou seest the naked, that thou couer him, &c? The summe and intent of which words is, that a true Fast, such as God doth require, and will requite, is to be ioyned with the practice of good workes. For the manner of speech is like to that of Saint *Iames* where he saith, that *pure religion and vndefiled is this, to visit the fatherlesse and widdowes in their affliction, and keepe himselfe vnspotted of the world.* Where hee meaneth not that religion, which is a dutie toward GOD, doth formally consist in these good workes, the doing of which is a dutie toward man: but that true and *sound Religion* is necessarily and by consequence ioyned with these workes. And so when God saith, that the Fast which he requireth, is to *loose bands of wickednes, &c.* and *to deale bread to the hungry, &c.* Hee meaneth not, that a true Fast doth essentially and formally consist in these workes, but that it is euer ioyned with them. And the good workes which God requireth to accompany a religious Fast, are of two sorts: some are workes of iustice, which are to *loose the bands of wickednesse*, to *vndoe the heauie burdens, &c.* that is, to surcease and leaue off their oppressing, and wronging of their brethren. And some againe, are workes of mercy, which are to *deale ones bread to the hungry*, to *cloathe the naked, &c.* By all which it doth appeare, that God maketh no account of fasting, if it be not ioyned with charity toward the poore, and iust dealing towards all men. The ancient Fathers, agreeably to Scriptures, are eloquent and plentifull in this argument.

Iames 1. 27.

Saint

Saint *Ambrose*, [a] *Hee that fasteth from meat, and abstaineth not from sinne, is like the Deuill, who doth not eat, and yet ceaseth not from sinne.* And againe the same Father; [b] *Wee that fast* (saith he) *let vs giue our dinners to the poore. So thou fasting shalt aske God pardon for thy sinnes, and hee beeing filled shall obtaine it for thee, and both of them shall be for thy good, both thy fasting, and the poore mans eating.* To the same purpose speaketh Saint *Augustin*, [c] *Then are our fasts accepted with God*, (saith hee) *if they which fast because they want meat, be relieued by vs.* And againe, the same Father, and in the same Sermon, [d] *While wee abstaine from lawfull things, wee are admonished more and more to eschew vnlawfull things. For wee that abstaine from flesh, which at other times wee may vse, ought especially to auoyd sinnes, which may neuer be vsed. And therefore if wee will fast rightly from meat, wee must aboue all fast from sinne.*

But Saint *Basil* most fully and fitly to this purpose; [e] *Doe not place* (saith he) *the good of fasting in the abstinence of meat: for true fasting consisteth in abstayning from sinne. For, if thou eat not flesh, but thou deuourest thy brother. Forbearest thou to drinke wine? but thou forbearest not to offer wrong to thy brother. And thou stayest till night before thou breake thy fast; but thou spendest all the day in Law-suites, and quarrelling.* And doest thou think

a *Illi qui ieiunant à cibo, & non se abstinent à malo, similes sunt diabolo, qui non manducat, & tamen à malo non cessat.* Ambros. Serm. 43. p. 61.

b *Qui abstinemus, prandia nostra pauperibus prærogemus. Sic tu pro deliciis tuis ieiunus Dominum roges, & ille pro te satiatus exoret: vtrumque tibi proficiens, & tua fames, & saturitas mendicorum.* Serm. 41. pag. 59.

c *Tum grata sunt Deo nostra ieiunia, si illi, qui necessitate ieiunant, resciant ea à nobis.* August. de Temp. Ser. 64. pag. 231. G.

d *Dum à licitis abstinemus, magis ac magis admonemur illicita vitare. Qui enim abstinemus nos à carnibus, quibus alijs diebus vti licet, &c. imprimis peccata fugiamus, quæ omnino nunquã licent. Itaque si volumus bene ieiunare à cibis, ante omnia ieiunemus & à vitijs.* Augustin. de Temp. Serm. 64. Dominica Quadragesi. p. 231. E.

e *Cave, ne ieiunij vilitatem sola escarum abstinentia metiaris. Vanum enim ieiunium est, ab omnibus vitijs esse alienum, &c.* Basil. de Ieiunio. Homil. 1. pag. 331.

to please God with such a godlesse fast? No, no, *Woe to them that are drunke, and not with wine.* And who be they? They are all such (saith he) *as are ouercome and haled away with vnruly lusts* of sinne, as of anger, and enuy, and reuenge, and ambition, and carnall pleasures. For all such vnmortified lusts are as so many kindes of drunkennesse. For hee that is led and possessed with these, hee is not his owne man: hee cannot see and discerne the way of reason, much lesse of religion, no more than a drunken man can find his way in the street. And if a man doe abstaine from wine, and yet be drunke with these vices; or if a man forbeare the flesh of beasts, and feed on the bloud of his brother, this is no truer a fast in Gods sight, than if he should abstaine from a weaker wine, and ouerwhelme himselfe with a stronger; or should fast from swines flesh, and glut himselfe with Partridge and Pheasant. The summe of all is, *A true Fast cannot be separated from an holy life.*

IIII. Fourthly, it is required that the soule doe consider of, and put in practice such holy duties, as a Fast doth by the outward behauiour make profession of.

Some doe require that euery Fasting-day bee kept as an Holy-day, without doing of any worldly worke, and with performing of such religious workes as belong to a Sabbath day. And their reason for this is, because God doth command the Iewes, that on their day of *expiation*, in which they were to *afflict* themselues with fasting, they should doe no worke, but that they should keepe it

it for a Sabbath of rest. But this I take to be an errour, at least, I dare not charge it as a necessary duety in any mans conscience, because I know no reason to enforce it. For to mine vnderstanding, the onely place of Scripture, which seemeth to incline this way, and vpon which they onely rest, doth make nothing for it at all. The place is in the sixteenth of *Leuiticus*, but especially in the three and twentieth of the same Booke, where the same words are repeated, and the poynt more fully declared. And therefore I will set downe the words there recorded, that the Christian Reader may the better consider of the meaning, and the more clearely see what to iudge of the reason. The words then are these, [a] *On the tenth day of this moneth there shall be a day of Atonement; it shall be an holy conuocation vnto you, and yee shall afflict your soules, and offer an offering made by fire vnto the Lord. And yee shall doe no worke in that same day: for it is a day of Atonement, to make an atonement for you before the Lord your God, &c.* (a) Leuitic. 23. 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32.

For better conceiuing of this Text, we must note, first, that the summe and intention of this Chapter is, to set downe the Feasts and the Holy-dayes of the Iewes, which are heere reckoned vp to be, the weekely *Sabbath*, the *Passeuer*, the *Offering of the first fruits*, *Pentecost*, the *Feast of the Trumpets*, the day of *Expiation*, and the feast of *Tabernacles*. And concerning these, it is said by way of preface in the beginning, [b] *Say vnto the children of Israel, Concerning the feasts of the Lord, which yee shall proclaime to be holy Conuocations, Eue-* (b) Verse 2.

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uen theſe are my Feaſts. And after the enumeration of them, it is ſaid, (a) *Theſe are the Feaſts of the Lord, which hee ſhall proclaime to be holy Conuocations, to offer an offering made by fire vnto the Lord, &c.* And in the end of the Chapter after all it is added, *And Moſes declared vnto the children of Iſrael the Feaſts of the Lord.* And from hence it may be gathered, that this day of *expiation*, which is placed among theſe holy-dayes, is intended as a *feſtiual* day, rather than as a *faſting* day. And therfore the faſt or humiliation heere commanded, is an appurtenance of the feaſt, and a ſeruice required on that holy day; & this day was appointed to be kept for an holy day, not becauſe it was a faſting day. Secondly, wee may note in the deſcription of this day, that the chiefe thing for which this day was intended, was for *expiation* and *atonement*. Thirdly, that the meanes by which this might be wrought, and the things which God requireth for the celebration of this day, were an *holy reſt*, a *publique meeting*, an *affliction* of the ſoule, and an *offering made by fire*. And hence we may gather, that an holy day and a *faſting* day are here ioyned, as two things, both of which reſpect one end. And therefore it followeth not, The people are here commanded to keepe an *holy* reſt vpon this *faſting* day: and therefore it is neceſſary that euery *faſting* day ſhould be kept *holy*: no more than this argument would follow from the ſame place; Here the people are commanded to keepe this *holy* day with *faſting*, and humiliation, and therfore euery *holy* day muſt be a *faſting* day.

(a) Verſ. 37.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, We may note, that the reason why God appointed this day to be kept *holy*, is said in the Text to bee this, because it is a *day of atonement for them before the Lord*: but it is not said that it was to be kept *holy*, because it was a *fasting* day. And hence I may conclude, that the Text doth giue no warrant that euery *fasting* day must bee kept *holy* day. Now let the Reader lay these notes and collections from the Text together, and compare them with the reason brought to proue the contrary, and hee will easily see how weake the argument is. For the onely reason that euer I read or heard of from this Text for proofe of this conclusion, is this; God heere commanded this *fasting* day to be kept holy, and therefore euery *fasting* day must be so kept. Which being nothing but an inference of an vniuersall from a singular, doth hereby appeare to bee weake and friuolous; besides the reasons now alledged from the Text to the contrary. And now after all, seeing that this is the onely place, on which this former conclusion is grounded, and it hath so little reason in it, as hath beene shewed: it remayneth, that to say euery *fasting* day of necessitie must bee an *holy* day, is an errour without all ground of probability.

The thing then that I meane, when I say, that it is required that on the day of our fast, the soule should practise such duties, as a Fasting-day by the outward behauiour doth include, is; that as by fasting wee professe our sorrow for sinne, with a purpose to serue God better; and doe abstaine

from fleshly comforts, that wee may more freely enioy the comforts of the Spirit: so a Christian should vse serious meditation and consideration of things requisite for this purpose. As for example, hee should examine his conscience, search out the state of his soule, settle in himselfe a purpose of amendment, confesse his sinnes that make him vnworthy to taste any of Gods creatures, and pray for grace to liue better. And that these and such like holy thoughts and desires are requisite vpon our fasting dayes, I am induced to thinke; partly, because in publique Fasts, (a) the Church hath beene accustomed to spend part of the day in publique meetings, and in religious exercises; and partly, because that outward abstinence cannot of it selfe worke those gracious effects, whereof I haue spoke before, vnlesse the soule by consideration & holy thoughts doe apply & make vse of his outward humiliation to this purpose. For fasting is not like physicke, which worketh while a man sleepeth: but then only affecteth the soule, and pleaseth God, when the heart maketh vse of it. A plaine proofe whereof may be this; Fasting hath this speciall vse, among others, that as the chastisements which GOD doth inflict vpon vs, doe serue to humble vs, and bring vs home by repentance; so these chastisements voluntarily imposed vpon our selues, may serue for like purpose; as hath beene fully declared already. But no outward chastisement, whether of Gods inflicting or our owne, can worke this effect, vnlesse the man doe lay them-

(a) Iudg 20.26. 2. Chron. 20. 3,4. Ezrah. 8. 23. Ier. 36.6,9, 10. Dan. 9.3. Ioel 1. 14. v. Kemnit. Exam. part. 4. de causa finali ieiun. nu. 47. pag. 94. & Serar. in Iudith. 8. q. 7. pag. 320.

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to his heart, and apply them to himselfe. Hence it is, that the Prophet complayneth of the people of Israel in this manner; [a] *Strangers haue deuoured his strength, and hee knoweth it not: yea, gray haires are here and there vpon him, yet he knoweth not.* In which words we may note two things: first, the corrections that were layd vpon them; and they were, that the Enemies had wasted and consumed them, and these and other miseries had brought *gray haires* vpon them, and made them old before the time. Secondly, the want of feeling in the people, *They know it not*: and againe, *Yet they know not*, saith the Text. But what? *Consumed* by the Enemy, and not *know* that they were strucken? *pined*, and become old with sorrow, and not feele their misery? No, that is not the meaning; they felt their misery, no doubt. But the Prophet meaneth, that they did not take notice, nor thinke and consider that it was Gods hand that inflicted this iudgement, and their own sinnes that deserued it: and therefore they were neuer the better for all this chastisement. And therefore another Prophet complayning to like purpose, saith, [b] *God powred vpon Israel the fury of his anger, and the strength of battell; and it hath set him on fire round about, yet hee knew not; and it burned him, yet hee laid it not to heart.* Which words imply, that no plagues moue men to repentance, if they doe not *lay* them *to heart*, and consider of the causes, and the conditions and euents of such things. And as Gods chastisements, for want of *laying* them to *heart*, are without their fruit for which they are intended:

(a) Hos. 7. 9.

(b) Isai. 42. 25.

tended: so wee may not expect that our owne chastisements should proue better. No: for we see that [a] *Esau fasted*, and his hunger made him sell away his *birth-right*: and [b] the Pharises fasted, and their fasts made them swell with pride and vaine-glory. And so we may fast by outward abstinence, and receiue no good, but hurt by it. And therefore for preuenting of this euill, we must doe in our humiliations, as God requireth vs to doe when hee correcteth vs, that is, [c] *bethink* our selues, & [d] *consider our waies*, & [e] *lay* them *to heart*. And for this purpose, that our fasting may profit vs in its season, it will be requisite vpon our fasting-dayes to set apart some time for holy thoughts and good meditations, and other exercises suteable to a time of humiliation and repentance. And if more may not be spared, by reason of other occasions, yet so much time I presume euery man may allot to this worke, as he spareth from his dinner, and the refreshing of his body. And the more any man is scanted of time, to be wholly imployed on this worke, the more he should striue to fasten his hart on these holy thoughts, euen while he is about his worldly occasions. And if men doe seriously and vnfeignedly bend their minds this way, I nothing doubt but they will finde so much liberty for this worke, as may make their fasting to bring good affections vnto their soules. These be the conditions, which, as I conceiue, are requisit in an holy Fast: make vse of them, and doubt not of the successe.

(a) Gen. 25.
(b) Matt. 6.
(c) 1 King. 8. 47.
(d) Ezek. 18. 28. Hagg. 1. 5, 7.
(e) Isa. 42. 25. & 57. 1.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

In what cases and for what purposes Fasting serueth to obtaine helpe and fauour from God.

FAsting rightly vsed, and with the conditions already mentioned, is very auaileable and of great vse in the life of a Christian. For beside the spirituall helps that wee may haue from it for furthering our deuotion, whereof I spake before, it is also a powerfull meanes to obtaine helpe and mercie from God in diuers necessary cases, or rather vpon euery occasion, wherein we doe stand in need of Gods speciall fauour and assistance. For

1. First and in generall, it is auaileable to obtaine Gods fauour and goodwill toward vs; and consequently to incline and moue him to helpe and protect vs, and to prouide for vs all good things, and to grant vs all our iust and lawfull desires. And this it doth for diuers causes, or in diuers respects.

1. Because Fasting is an exercise of *humiliation* and subiection, whereby we doe submit and cast our selues downe before Gods feete, as vnworthy, in respect of our many sinnes, to vse any the least of his creatures. And *humiliation* is a ready way to obtaine fauour. By it [a] *Benhadad* won the heart of

(a) 1 King. 20. 31. &c.

of the King of *Israel*, not onely to spare his life, but to intreate him with all kindnesse: though he had found much hard measure from him immediately before. And by it, sinfull men, who haue offended God by their sinnes, may finde ready
(a) Iam. 4. 6. fauour at Gods hands. For [a] *he resisteth the proud,*
(b) 1 Pet. 5. 6. *and giueth grace to the humble.* And if men [b] *humble themselues vnder the mighty hand of God, he will*
(c) Isa. 66. 2. *exalt them in due time.* And, [c] *All these things hath mine hand made, saith the Lord; but to this man will I looke, euen to him, that is poore, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my words.* Which is, as if he should say, The heauens and the earth, and the seas, and all things within them, all of them bee mine, for I made them, and I preserue them, and I may command them, and make vse of them at my pleasure; but among them all, my delight is, and I make choyce to dwell and reside with him, that humbleth himselfe before me. It followeth; And if *humiliation* be so welcome to God, fasting must needs obtaine his fauour, when it is rightly vsed.

2. Because Fasting is an exercise of *Repentance*, and a meanes to worke reformation and amendment of life. And *Repentance* and amendment is the ready way to obtaine mercie and fauour. For
(d) Iohn 9. 31. [d] *We know* (saith the blinde man now restored to his sight) *that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth.* In which sentence there are two things considerable. 1. The sentence it selfe: *God heareth not sinners*, that is, God doth not respect the pray-

prayer of sinners, which persist in any sinne, without repenting and reforming themselues; nor is it reason that he should care to fulfill their desires, who haue no care to fulfill his Lawes. But *if any man be a worshipper of God, and doth his will, &c.* That is, if any man endeuour to serue God, by forsaking sinne, and performing good duties, God heareth that mans prayer, and will not deny him any request, that may be for his good. Secondly, we may consider in this saying, the certainty and vndoubted truth of it: *We know,* (saith he:) he saith not, *we thinke,* or *we hope,* or *we are perswaded* of it; but we know it, as a thing that is cleere and out of question. Againe, *Wee know*; he doth not say, *I know,* or *you know,* or the *learned* Doctors know; but *Wee,* I, and you, and all doe agree in this principle, That God reiecteth the prayers of sinners, but [a] *his eares are open to the cry of the righteous: and,* [b] *he will fulfill the desire of them that feare him: he also will heare their cry and will saue them.* And if amendment of life and practice of righteousnes be so powerfull with God, then fasting rightly vsed, cannot want his effect.

(a) Psal. 34. 15.
(b) Ps. 145. 19.

3. Because fasting rightly vsed, is a meanes to *eleuate* the minde, and to enflame a zeale and deuotion, and to set an edge on our prayers, as was formerly declared. But [c] *the effectuall feruent prayer of a righteous man auaileth much,* saith the Apostle. And consequently, fasting is a good meanes to impetrate grace and fauour.

(c) Iam. 5. 16.

In these and such like respects, fasting may steed vs with God, to incline him to our prayers. And there-

therefore God himself reproving the ill-gouern'd Fasts of the Iewes, [a] *Ye shall not* (saith he) *fast, as yee doe this day, to make your voyce to bee heard on high.* Where he signifieth, that their ill handling of their Fasts, was the cause that their prayers were not heard; and implyeth withall, that a right and well-ordered Fast would haue pierced the clouds, and obtained audience in heauen.

(a) Isa. 58. 4.

II. Secondly and more particularly, it may serue vs to obtaine fauour and mercy in these and such like speciall cases.

1. If a man stand guiltie of sinne, and lyable to Gods anger, fasting may serue to appease Gods anger, and to obtaine pardon of the sinne. This end *Ezrah* had of his fasting. For when the people had sinned in taking strange wiues, first he confessed the sinne, [b] *Behold, O Lord God of Israel, we are before thee in our trespasses: for wee cannot stand before thee because of this.* And secondly, hee betooke himselfe to abstinence and fasting. [c] *He did eate no bread, nor drinke water: for he mourned because of the transgression of them that had beene carried away.* And lastly, [d] he tooke order that they did both *put away their wiues, and being guiltie, did offer a Ram of the flocke for their trespasse.* In which practice of this holy man, it appeareth, that fasting was one meanes, by which he sought pardon for the sinne. And to like purpose, the Lord himselfe appointed the Iewes, to ioyne fasting with repentance. [e] *Turne ye vnto me with all your heart,* (saith he) *and with fasting, and with weeping and with mourning, and rent your hearts, &c. For he is gracious*

(b) Ezra 9. 15. & 10. 1.

(c) Ezra 10. 6.

(d) verf. 19.

(e) Ioel 2. 12.

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ous, and mercifull, &c. And for this cause, some of the Learned say, that [a] *Paul* did fast and pray for three dayes space, that he might obtaine pardon for his former sinnes committed before his conuersion. (a) Act. 9.

2. If a man be lyable to Gods Iudgements, and either be vnder the sense of some present crosse, or in feare of some future euill; fasting is a good meanes to preuent the one, and to remoue the other. Examples hereof wee haue in Scriptures. For of the *Ninevites* we reade, that when GOD had threatned; [b] *Yet forty dayes, and Nineueh shall be ouerthrowne: they beleeued God, and proclaimed a Fast, and put on sack-cloth*, and so they [c] preuented the iudgement. (b) Ion. 3. 4. (c) vers. vlt.

And *Iehosaphat*, when he and his people were in great danger by reason of a great Armie of Moabites and Ammonites that came against them; [d] *he feared, and set himselfe to seeke the Lord, and he proclaimed a Fast throughout all Iudah*: and by this meanes [e] hee escaped the danger. (d) 2 Chro. 20. 3. (e) v. 15, 22, &c.

And *Dauid*, when his child was sicke and in danger of death, [f] *he fasted*, and prayed for his life. And though God saw it not good at that time to spare the childs life: yet by this it appeareth, that *Dauid* knew fasting and prayer to be an ordinary and effectuall meanes to auert Iudgements, or else hee would not haue vsed it. Yea, and so powerfull is fasting for this purpose, that [g] *Ahab* by his, though no sound fasting, did preuent a worldly iudgement. And our Sauiour telleth vs, [h] that there are some such diuels as cannot be cast out of the possessed *but by prayer & fasting*. (f) 2 Sam. 12. 16. (g) 1. King. 21. 27, 29. (h) Mat. 17. 21.

assuring vs heereby, that when no other meanes can, yet prayer and fasting may preuaile.

3. If a man haue neede of some speciall blessing or mercy from God, fasting is a good meanes to obtaine it. This may be declared by the example of *Ezrah*. For he and his Country-men, the men of *Iudah*, were to goe vp to *Ierusalem* from *Babylon* the place of their captiuity, and many lets they found in the way, and little help for so great a iourney: and heereupon, (a) *I proclaimed a Fast*, (saith he) *that we might afflict our selues before our God, to seeke of him a right way for vs, and for our little ones, and for all our substance.* Where we may note, that the thing which hee desired, was, that God would direct them and leade them *in a right way* in safety and without danger: and the meanes that he vsed to obtaine this, was fasting. The successe whereof what it was, is declared afterward, where *Ezrah* saith, (b) *So we fasted, and besought our God for this, and hee was intreated by vs.* And to like purpose it is, that the Church of *Antioch*, when they were to send *Paul* and *Barnabas* about the worke of the Ministery and preaching of the Gospell, (c) *they fasted and prayed, and layed their hands on them*; and so sent them about the worke. Yea and our (d) Lord himselfe, being to enter vpon his Prophetical office, began with fasting, and thereby prepared himself for that glorious worke, as may appeare hereafter more fully in the proper place. By all which we may see what commodities and benefits we may reape by this exercise, not onely for our soules & our spirituall profit, but

(a) Ezra. 8.21.

(b) verse. 23.

(c) Act. 13.3.

(d) Mat. 4.2.

for our bodies also, and our welfare in the world. And hence, for conclusion of this poynt, I deduce and inferre three Aduertisements for our further vse.

1. We may hence obserue one speciall reason, why we are many times afflicted, and after long griefe finde little ease: and it may be, because we do not repent of our sinnes before we beg mercy; or if we vse some kinde of repentance, yet it is not with that sorrow, & such chastening of our selues, as God doth expect, and the case doth require. For in Scriptures we finde that Gods people, if eyther they felt any present scourge, or feared any future danger, then they betooke themselues presently to their prayers, and fasting, and sack-cloth: and by this meanes they haue gotten victory ouer enemies, and reliefe in time of dearth, and freedome from intended mischiefes, and ease and comfort in all cases of distresse. And if wee should vse the same meanes, why might wee not expect the same successe? For the Apostle speaking of *Abrahams* faith, [a] *that it was imputed to him for righteousnes*, addeth, that *it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for vs also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we beleeue on him that raised vp Iesus our Lord from the dead.* And elsewhere he saith of the many examples of Gods Iudgements vpon sinners, that [b] *these things happened to them for examples, and are written for our admonition, that we should not lust after euill things, as they lusted.* And so, seeing such things are recorded in Scriptures concerning Fasting; wee

(a) Rom. 4. 23, 24.

(b) 1 Cor. 10. 6, 11.

may and must conclude, that *these things were not written* for those ancient seruants of God onely, that they by this meanes obtained such great blessings; but for our sakes also, and to admonish vs, that if we vse the same meanes, we shall attaine the same end. And therefore, if any of vs haue beene long afflicted, and yet are not deliuered; let vs consider whether we haue not beene defectiue in this dutie, and for want of *humiliation* haue missed of the blessing. Surely, if we find not ease, eyther we haue not humbled our selues as we should, or the thing that we desire, is no such blessing to vs, as wee doe imagine.

2. We may from hence learne, how to make our prayers powerfull with God. For God hath appointed vs to aske, and hath tyed himselfe to giue, but it is vpon condition, that we *aske according to his will*, and in such sort as we ought to aske. For *ye aske & receiue not, because ye aske amisse*, saith the Apostle. But what is that condition that God requireth in our prayers? And how may wee aske, that we *misse* not of our requests? Why? surely, one meanes that may make all our prayers the more effectuall, is, if they be feruent and with feeling: and one condition, on which God doth grant some petitions, is, if they proceede from a soule humbled with fasting. For as our Lord saith, that there is a kinde of Diuels that cannot bee driuen out *but by prayer and fasting*: so I may say, that some sinnes may be pardoned, and some iudgements auerted, and some blessings obtained by prayer ioyned with ordinary humiliation and repentance.

(a) 1. Ioh. 5. 14.

(b) Iam. 4. 3.

repentance: (for it cannot be expected that wee should fast so often as we may and ought to pray) yet some sinnes there may be of so deepe a dye, that ordinary sorrow may not be admitted for their expiation: and some blessings there may be of that worth, and of that importance, that they may seeme too lightly esteemed, if they were too easily obtayned. And of such I may say, these kinds of sinnes are not pardoned, and these kinds of blessings are not obtayned but *by prayer and fasting*. And if the pardon of greater sinnes, and the purchase of greater gifts bee to be sought for by prayer and fasting: then in the lesser of them we shall speede the sooner, if we come in the same manner. If then wee desire to make our prayers powerfull, and to pierce the heavens, we must help to lift them vp with this wing of fasting, as the Fathers call it.

3. We may hence gather, how necessary fasting is for all sorts, and at all times, and in speciall for our selues in these dayes. For, to say nothing of the spirituall helps that it hath for increase of grace and deuotion, (which alone consideration should moue any Christian, if not to be in loue with it, yet at least to giue way to it) and to insist only in the further blessings now mentioned: who is there, that is not priuie to himselfe of some sinne, which without pardon may be his ruine? And who is there, that either doth not now suffer, or may not iustly feare some iudgement hereafter, which hee would gladly preuent or auoyd? And againe, who is there that doth

not want and desire some blessing & gift of God, that may greatly concerne his body, or his soule, or his estate? But if any man be so happy, as to haue need of none of these mercies; or rather so vnhappy, as not to feele & know that he hath need of them all, or at least many of them: yet if wee looke abroad vpon the face of the Christian world, wee may see many of our brethren that serue the same Lord, robbed of their goods, depriued of their liberty, & butchered in their own dwellings: yea and many houses burned downe, Townes laid waste, fields left vntilled, and streets and high-wayes swimming in bloud, and enduring al other miseries, which the cruelty of bloody warres, and insolency of proud Conquerers doe vse to bring with them. And beside all this, who can tell whose turne is next, and at whose doore the Trumpet may blow? *Quis talia fando temperet à lachrymis?* A compassionate Christian cannot thinke on this, without watery eyes and a bleeding heart. And therefore if wee should haue no present cause of our owne; yet, if there bee any bowels within vs, we haue great cause to weepe, and wish with *Ieremie*, that *our eyes were a fountaine of teares*, to bemone the miseries of our brethren, and the distresse of Gods Church. And how much greater cause then haue wee, with *Ezrah* and *Nehemiah* & *Daniel*, to *humble* our selues *before our God*, and with fasting and weeping and sorrow, to intreate Gods fauour for his Church, that he will be gracious to his people, & will spare his owne inheritance, and will at length turne a-

gaine the captivity of his Zion; that wee may reioyce in his saluation, and giue him thankes in the great Congregation? Surely, if in such cases any man can thinke that there is no neede of fasting; I must needes say, I cannot but thinke that hee hath no feeling.

CHAP. VII.

Why Christ fasted at this time.

(a) Philip. 3. 8.

HEretofore I haue spoken of Fasting in *abstracto*, as it may be considered in & by it selfe: It followeth now to say something of it in *subiecto*, as it was vsed by our Sauiour. And hereof the Euangelist saith, *Hee fasted forty dayes and forty nights*: which words being ioyned with that which is said in the first verse, that *then hee was led into the wilderness, and fasted*, meaning, after hee was baptized, and as it were now consecrated for his publique ministery, doe giue vs occasion to enquire into, and to consider of these fiue points:

(b) Rom. 5. 8.
(c) 2 Cor. 8. 9.

1. *Why Christ fasted at this time.*
2. *Why hee fasted so long.*
3. *When wee should or may lawfully fast.*
4. *How long wee should continue our fasts.*
5. *What wee are to thinke of the forty dayes Fast, commonly called Lent-fast.*

And first, Why our Lord did fast at this time,

our

I finde nothing expressly said in the Text: but by considering the circumstances of Christs fast, and by comparing other Scriptures with this Text, wee may conceiue diuers reasons of his so doing, which will be profitable for vs to take notice of: which so far as I do now apprehend, may be these.

I. First, wee may well thinke that he fasted, that hereby he might performe a part of that *humiliation* and those sufferings which hee voluntarily vndertooke for our sakes. For our Lord beeing equall with God, and farre aboue the infirmities of our nature, (a) *tooke vpon him the forme of a seruant, and humbled himselfe euen vnto death.* In which his humiliation, there be diuers steps and degrees. For the last and greatest, and that which is the perfection of all, was his death and passion vpon the Crosse: and yet his meane birth, his poore estate, his reproches in the world, his want of things necessary, his debilities of nature, and other such infirmities and wants, were all of them as preparatiues to his death, and parts of those sufferings which hee sustained for our sinnes. For which cause it is, that the Apostle doth not onely say, (b) *that he died for vs*; but saith also that (c) *hee beeing rich, became poore for our sakes.* And so by the same reason, wee may say that he being God, became man for our sakes, and being strong, became weake for our sakes, and being glorious, became contemptible for our sakes, and beeing Lord of all, became destitute of all things for our sakes: And so in like sort, hee sweat, and feared, and fasted, and thirsted, and hungred, and all for our

(a) Philip. 2. 6, 7, 8.

(b) Rom. 5. 8.

(c) 2 Cor. 8. 9.

our sakes. And therefore of his fasting (the thing that is proper to this place) the Church speaketh thus in her prayers: (a) *O Lord, which for our sakes didst fast forty dayes and forty nights.* This then I take to be one reason, He therefore fasted in this manner, and the rather perhaps at this time, when he was in more speciall manner to goe about the worke of our salvation; because it was a part of those sufferings, which hee did vndergoe for our sakes.

(a) Collect on the first Sunday in Lent.

Where, by the way, we may reflect vpon our selves, and tell our owne soules; that if our Lord did doe all these things for *our sakes*, we should not thinke much to doe a little for *his sake*. But more especially, seeing hee fasted so many dayes and nights for vs; wee should not grudge to fast a little now and then for him. But how for him? For I suppose, all men will be ready to say, that if they knew they should fast for *Christs sake*, as hee fasted for ours; that then they would doe it with a good will, or else it were pity of their lives. To such men, if any shall make such demand, my answer is; Wee may truly be said to fast for Christs sake many wayes. As first, if we fast, that we may with more reverence, and better attention, and greater fervour performe holy ductie vnto him. In which kinde they fast for Christ, who, when they come to Church, to heare, and pray, and prayse God, and to partake of the blessed Sacrament of Christs body, doe forbeare their meate, that they may bee more fresh to attend to those holy duties, and because they doe preferre Gods

seruice before their owne necessity, and doe loue the Word and the Sacrament more than their necessary food. Secondly, wee may be said to fast for Christ, if wee fast, that wee may subdue those sinnes that nayled Christ to his Crosse; and which if wee commit them, doe *crucifie againe the Sonne of God, and make a mocke of him.* (a) Heb. 6. 6. And in this kinde they fast for Christ, who forbeare their meat, that they may sorrow for their sinnes, and may arme themselues against temptations, and bring vnder their body, that their flesh doe not wax wanton against Christ. Thirdly, wee may fast for Christs sake, if wee forbeare to feed our selues, that wee may haue wherewith to relieue others, who being the poore members of Christ, haue neede of our supply. For what is done to any one of those little ones, is esteemed as done to Christ himselfe. And sure, if Christ did fast so long, that hee might supply vs, it were both sinne and shame, not to forbeare a meale, if need require, that wee may cherish Christ in his members.

In this manner, and by these meanes, wee may be said to fast for Christ. Let vs make vse of them in our practice, and wee shall hereby shew our loue to our Sauiour, as hee by fasting forty dayes for vs, shewed his great loue vnto vs.

II. A second cause why our Lord fasted at this time, may be, that hee might by this meanes prouoke Sathan to begin his assault. The declaration and proofe of this assertion dependeth vpon two things: first, that his fasting was a fit occasion,

that might prouoke the Deuill to the on-set: secondly, that Christ was willing to giue him such an occasion.

And first, that this was a fit occasion, appeareth by 2. things. 1. Because when men are in distresse, then is the Deuils opportunity to tempt them, eyther to distrust God, because hee leaueth them without reliefe; or to vse vnlawfull meanes, that they may relieue themselues. 2. Because the euent sheweth that Christs hunger caused by his fasting, was the occasion that Sathan tooke to assault him. For when he saw him fainting for want of bread, then hee thought it a fit time to say, *If thou be the Sonne of God, command that this stone bee made bread.* And what the euent did make manifest afterward, that our Lord knew very well beforehand.

Secondly, That our Lord was willing to giue the Deuill such an occasion to prouoke him to the combat, may appeare by two things also. 1. Because it was Gods will to haue it so; as is euident by this, that the *Spirit* of God *led him into the wildernesse, to be tempted of the Deuill:* and Christs will was euer agreeable to the will of his Father. 2. Because Christ did so thirst after our saluation, that hee refused no paynes, nor no danger, to procure it. Hee left heauen, that he might become man for vs; hee tooke our base nature, that hee might beare our infirmities; and he went vp to Ierusalem, that hee might be crucified; and hee came into the world, that hee might saue the world by his sufferings. And so, seeing the temp-

tations of Sathan, by which hee assaulted our Saviour, might be profitable for vs, and availeable for our saluation; (for so Sathan might be ouercome at his owne weapon, and wee armed against his assaults afterward:) wee neede not doubt, but as the *Spirit led Christ into the wildernesse, to be tempted of the Deuill*, so our Lord himselfe would fast and hunger, that the Deuill might assault him.

And heere againe by the way, a Christian may haue a good meditatiõ from his Masters practice: that seeing Christ was ready to fight against the Deuill for our sakes; wee should not feare to stand out against men for his sake. But if Religion be a cause, that wee are questioned by Enemies, or disgraced by worldlings, or kept from preferment by great Ones; wee must beare oppositions of men, for loue to Christ; as hee bore these temptations of the Deuill, for loue vnto vs.

III. A third cause may be, that by this exercise of fasting, hee might prepare and fit himselfe for the great worke that hee was about. For hee was now to enter vpon his Propheticall Office, and to begin the publique function of his Ministery. And in this, and such like cases as this, Gods seruants haue vsed to make preparation by fasting and prayers, as may bee seene in the example of [a] *Paul* and *Barnabas*, and [b] other Presbyters of diuers Churches. And therefore seeing our Lord here fasted for a long space, and that at such a time as he was to enter vpon the ministery

(a) Act. 13. 3.
(b) Act. 14. 23.

of

of the Gospell; we may well thinke that this is one reason of his fasting, that hee might prepare himselfe for this great seruice. Onely the doubt may be; But what needed our Lord any such preparation? For 1. hee was not defectiue in any grace. For *God* [a] *gaue not the spirit to him by measure*: but *he was* [b] *full of grace and truth*. 2. Our Lord was an innocent [c] *Lambe, without blemish and without spot*. And what needed hee such preparatiue helps, that had all grace, and no sinne?

I answere, there be three reasons hereof. First, that he might stirre vp, and inflame, and (as yee would say) actuate the grace which he had already. To this purpose it is, that when hee was to pray, he [d] *went into a mountaine*, or some other priuate place *alone*, [*ardentioris orationis causa*,] *that he might pray the more feruently*, say the Learned. And so againe, when he was to raise vp *Lazarus*, [e] *he groaned, and was troubled, saith Iohn, he troubled himselfe*, that is, he stirred vp his sorrow, and moued his bowels vnto compassion and pitty. Secondly, that he might confirme and radicate, and, I thinke I may say, that he might in some sort increase the graces that he had. For the Scriptures say, that he tooke vpon him our infirmities, [f] *that he might be a mercifull and faithfull High-priest*: and that [g] *he learned obedience by that which hee suffered*: and that [h] *he endured the Crosse, and despised the shame, for the ioy that was set before him*: and that in his greatest sorrow, [i] *an Angel came to strengthen him*. By which speeches we may gather, that his feeling of our wants, and his bearing of

(a) Ioh.3.34.
(b) Ioh.1.14.
(c) 1 Pet.1.19.
(d) Mat.14.23.
(e) Ioh.11.33.
(f) Heb.2.17.18
(g) Heb.5.8.
(h) Heb.12.2.
Luk.22.43.

of afflictions, and his consideration of future ioyes, and the presence and conference of an Angell, did *increase or confirme* his compassion toward vs, and his obedience to his Father, and his patience, and his courage in his conflicts: or else I know not what they meane, and whereto they serue. And if they intend thus much, then by the same reason we may say, that his praying and fasting and meditating might serue to increase or confirme or preserue the graces of the spirit, which did enable him for his office. Thirdly, hee vsed this preparation, that he might obtaine a blessing vpon his labours, that they might become profitable to the Hearers. For so we reade, that he still vsed to commend businesses to Gods blessing. When he fed the people, [a] he *looked vp to heauen, and blessed, and brake, and gaue them, &c.* that is, He prayed for a blessing vpon the meat: and so, when he consecrated the Sacrament, [b] *he blessed it.* And when he was to leaue the world, and to send his Disciples to supply his place of preaching, [c] hee *prayed not only* for the Preachers, but *for them also that should beleeue through their word.* And so, it is reasonable also to thinke, that Christ did now fast and pray for a blessing vpon the word, that hee was to preach, and vpon the people to whom hee was to preach. Thus in diuers good respects, our Lord might vse his fasting for a preparation, to fit him for his publike office: and because we cannot conceiue that our Lord would omit an exercise so good and so proper for his present occasion, we may wel suppose that one cause of his fasting was,

(a) Mat. 14.19.
(b) Mat. 26.26.
(c) Ioh. 17.20.

to

to prepare himselfe for this great seruice of his Ministery.

IIII. A fourth and last cause why Christ fasted heere, may bee, that he might giue vs an example by his owne practice. For as a wise and carefull Physician will sometime taste the Physicke which he prescribeth, that he may encourage his patient to take it: so our Lord vpon occasion did many things for our example. So the Apostle saith, Christ [a] *suffered for vs, leauing vs an example that we should follow his steps.* And when our Lord had washed his Disciples feete, himselfe telleth them his reason; [b] *I haue giuen you an example* (saith he) *that ye should doe, as I haue done vnto you.* And so seeing he vsed fasting heere, before the entrance of his publike seruice and calling, he might doe it for this reason among others; that he might leaue vs an example, vpon the like occasion to vse the like practice.

(a) 1. Pet. 2. 21.

(b) Ioh. 13. 15.

And from hence we haue two conclusions, that may further commend the holy vse of a religious Fast.

1. That an holy Fast is a good exercise to begin our Callings & all important businesses withall. For not onely *Moses*, when he was to receiue the Law; and *Elias*, when he was to restore the Law; but Iesus Christ himselfe, when he was to perfect the Law, did fast and pray, before they vndertooke the worke: and so if any of vs be to enter vpon a calling, or to vndergoe some great seruice; if for example, we be called to bee Magistrates, or are to enter vpon the state of marriage,

or

of afflictions, and his consideration of future ioyes, and the presence and conference of an Angell, did *increase or confirme* his compassion toward vs, and his obedience to his Father, and his patience, and his courage in his conflicts: or else I know not what they meane, and whereto they serue. And if they intend thus much, then by the same reason we may say, that his praying and fasting and meditating might serue to increase or confirme or preserue the graces of the spirit, which did enable him for his office. Thirdly, hee vsed this preparation, that he might obtaine a blessing vpon his labours, that they might become profitable to the Hearers. For so we reade, that he still vsed to commend businesses to Gods blessing. When he fed the people, [a] he *looked vp to heaven, and blessed, and brake, and gaue them, &c.* that is, He prayed for a blessing vpon the meat: and so, when he consecrated the Sacrament, [b] *he blessed it.* And when he was to leaue the world, and to send his Disciples to supply his place of preaching, [c] hee *prayed not only* for the Preachers, but *for them also that should beleeue through their word.* And so, it is reasonable also to thinke, that Christ did now fast and pray for a blessing vpon the word, that hee was to preach, and vpon the people to whom hee was to preach. Thus in diuers good respects, our Lord might vse his fasting for a preparation, to fit him for his publike office: and because we cannot conceiue that our Lord would omit an exercise so good and so proper for his present occasion, we may wel suppose that one cause of his fasting was,

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or

or to begin a trade or profession in the world, or to vndertake any waighty matter; it is a good rule (and we haue good authority for it) to consecrate our entrance by an holy Fast. And sure I am perswaded, it is one great cause, that we haue oftentimes so little comfort in the execution of our places, because we vse so little Religion in our entrance into them. But if wee would follow Christs steps, we might hope for his blessing to direct vs.

2. That an holy Fast hath a proper vse in the consecrating and ordayning of Ministers for the seruice of the Church. Our Lord vsed it heere, when he was consecrated and appointed for his Ministery; and the Apostolicall Church by his example vsed it, when *Paul* and *Barnabas* and other Elders, were to be sent abroad for preaching of the Gospell: and the Christian Church afterward, by example of Christ and his Apostles, haue appointed the foure solemn times of fasting to be the set and solemn times for giuing of Orders, and for sending of Ministers into the Church. And their warrant is Christs example, and the practice of the Apostles and the Apostolicall Church. The common neglect of which times, and this holy exercise to be vsed at those times and for this purpose, may bee one reason, why the Church is not better prouided of Teachers, and the people are not more profited by their labours. For redresse whereof, it were to be wished, that publike Authority would appoint some publike meetings at those times, that by fasting and prayer we might

commend that great worke to Gods blessing with one consent of heart. But because it is not in the power of priuate men, to make publike orders; euery Christian shall doe well in his deuotions at home, by fasting and Prayer to begge a blessing on that sacred worke: that God would direct the Fathers of our Church, to admit fit men to that sacred function, and would enable the then ordained Ministers, to profit the Church by their labours, and would sanctifie all, to make vse of his Word, and the publike Ministery, while we haue it, and doe enioy it.

CHAP. VII.

Why Christ fasted forty dayes and forty nights.

IN relating of our Sauiours Fast, the Euangelist setteth downe the continuance of the time. *He fasted fortie dayes and fortie nights,* saith hee. In which words wee haue two things to consider of. 1. Why the Euangelist mentioneth *nights* as well as *dayes*. 2. Why our Lord made choyce of this number of *dayes*, to determine his Fast by.

1. And for the former question, Why the Euangelist mentioneth *nights* as well as *dayes*; the answere is, he did it, lest any man should thinke, that though he fasted by *day*, yet he did eate at *night*.

For it is true indeed, that the name of *dayes* doth many times include the *nights* also; especially if the condition of the things spoken of, be such, as what is said of the for the day time, is left to be vnderstood of the night time too. As when it is said, (a) Luk. 1. 74, 75. [a] *that being deliuered out of the hands of our enemies, we might serue God without feare all the dayes of our life*; the name of *dayes* includeth the whole space till the end of the time mentioned, because the seruice of God is such as may not be neglected either by *night* or *day*. And so, when it is said of *Lazarus*, (b) Ioh. 11. 39. [b] that he had beene *dead foure dayes*, the meaning is, that he was dead all that while, both by *night* and *day*; because men that are dead by day, doe not vse to liue by night, and then dye the next day againe. And so againe, when it is said of *Saul*, that hee *was three dayes without sight*, the meaning is, that hee was blinde for so many *dayes* and so many *nights*. And the reason is the same, because if a man be blind for so many *dayes*, it cannot be conceiued that he had his sight in the night time. In these & such like cases, the condition of the things is such, that what is said of the for the *day*, must be taken for the *night* too. And in such cases, there is no neede to mention the nights. But yet sometimes, as when the speech is of such things, which though they happen in the *day*, yet are vsed to be intermitted in the *night*, then the name of the *dayes* doth not include the night also: As when it is said of *Laban*, that he pursued after *Iacob* (c) Gen. 31. 23. [c] *seuen dayes iourney*: the meaning is, he followed so farre, as a man may, or doth vse to goe in

the space of seuen *dayes*, not counting the *nights*, because men that trauell by *day*, are supposed to take vp their lodging, and rest in the *night* time. And so, if a man should hire an ordinary day-labourer to worke with him for two or three daies, all men would vnderstand the bargaine to be made of working in the *day*, and not in the *night* time: but if a Mariner should bee hyred to labour in a ship by sea, or a nurse to attend a sicke partie for the same number of dayes, euery man would construe that both of *day* and *night*; because such labours and paines as the mariner and nurse do take in such cases, are to be continued aswell by *night* as by *day*. Now when the speech is of such things, as being done in the day, may be intermitted, or vse to be intermitted by night, then the name of dayes doth not include or comprize the nights also. And so it falleth out in this matter of fasting. For when the Iewes were to fast for many dayes together, their maner was to abstaine from meate all the day, but at night to eate a sparing meale; as I haue declared in another place alrea- Chap. 1. p. 7, 8.
dy. And hereupon the Learned doe obserue, that the Iewes, when they speake of *many dayes Fast*, without mentioning the nights, they vnderstand it commonly of fasting onely in the day time, till euening: and that when they meane that a Fast is continued for diuers dayes, without eating any thing at night, then for distinction sake, and that their meaning may be plaine, they adde the nights too; as when *Ester* saith to the Iewes, a *Fast ye* (a) Ester 4. 16.
for me, and neither eate nor drinke three dayes, night

or day. And so in this place, Saint *Mathew* saith, that *Christ fasted forty dayes and forty nights,* lest any man should conceiue, that hee abstained all day for that space, but did refresh himselfe in the euening.

II. The second question is, Why our Lord made choyce of this number of *fortie,* to determine his fasting by. This question may admit two constructions, and so receiue two answers accordingly. For first it may be vnderstood of the precise number of *fortie,* why iust so many dayes, without missing, either vnder or ouer. Or secondly, it may be meant of an extraordinary number of dayes, and space of time, that is, why hee fasted so many dayes and nights, as it exceedeth mans strength to endure without eating.

[a] *Quadragesima sanè ieiuniorum habet autoritatẽ, & in veteribus libris ex ieiunio Mosi & Heliæ; et ex Euãgelio, quia totidẽ diebus Dominus ieiunauit, demonstrans Euangelium nõ dissentire à Lege & Prophetis. In persona quippe Mosi, Lex; in persona Heliæ, Prophetæ accipiuntur: inter quos et in mõte gloriosus apparuit, vt euidentiùs emineret, quod de illo dicit Apostolus,* testimonium habens à Lege & Prophetis. August. Epist. 119. ad Ianuar. cap. 15. pag. 195. t.

1. If wee take it in the former sense, then I thinke I may safely say, as many of the Learned doe, that our Lord did make choyce of this number of dayes, that hee might therein conforme himselfe to the two great Prophets of the Old Testament, *Moses* and *Elias.* For *Moses* was the giuer of the Law, and *Elias* was the restorer of the Law; and both were in their kinde, the most excellent Prophets that the old Church had: and both of them, for the confirmation of their calling, and to gaine credit to their places, did fast *forty dayes* and *forty nights,* when they were to speake with God in the Mount, as it is recorded of *Moses, Exod.* 34. 28. *Deut.* 9. 9. and of *Elias,* 1 *King.* 19. 8. [a] Now our Lord, to shew that he was not inferior to either of these great Prophets,

and

and that they did consent and agree with him, thought good to begin his Ministery, as they did theirs, with a miraculous Fast of *forty dayes*. To which purpose wee likewise reade, that when our Lord was *transfigured* in the Mount, [a] *Moses and Elias appeared vnto him, and talked with him, and spake of his death* and passion. And this did serue for a cleare confirmation of Christs calling and authority, that these two speciall and principall Prophets did both concurre to beare witnesse of him: and hereby it appeared, that the Gospell had *witnesse of the Law and the Prophets*, as the Apostle speaketh, *Rom.* 3. 21.

(a) Matt. 17. 3. & Luk. 9. 30, 31.

But then the question may be further, Why did *Moses* fast *forty dayes and forty nights*, and that at two seuerall times, when he was with God in the Mount? And hereto I answere, that many both ancient and moderne Writers, especially those that be in the Church of Rome, doe say that there was a *mystery* in this number; and that that was the reason why both *Moses*, and *Elias*, and our Saiour also did fast that space of time: but eyther they say not what that mystery was, or else they proue not what they say: nay, themselues cannot agree what to say. For some interpret the mystery one way, and some another, as euery mans seuerall fancy doth leade him: the relation of which sundry conceits, would be more tedious than profitable. But to the poynt it selfe, for my part I haue onely two things to say. 1. That though I will not peremptorily condemne their opinion who conceiue a *mystery* in the number;

ber, [b] for the reuerence that I beare to those ancient and learned Fathers, which incline that way: yet I neuer could reade in any, nor can I conceiue any probable reason, why (if so it had pleased God) some other number neere to *forty*, as say 39, or 41 might not haue fitted this occasion as well.

Secondly, that it is not vnlikely, but that without further mystery, God onely intended *Moses* and *Elias* and Christ to fast so long, as being aboue the strength of man, it might appeare that they were sustayned by the power of God, and that therefore their calling and office was from heauen. Now for this purpose, the wisdome of God did see such a continuance of time, as about *forty dayes*, to be both sufficient and conuenient: and because forty is the round number, and as fit as any other, did make choyce of that, to determine this abstinence by. This I take to bee probable; but I presume not to affirme any thing: nor will I be curious to enquire into that, which God hath not reuealed. And so I leaue the first sense of the question.

2. If wee take it in the latter, as importing only a long abstinence which exceedeth the power of nature, then the question is, Why our Sauiour would fast so long, and in such a miraculous manner.

Ans. Hereof there may be giuen two plaine and apparant reasons.

1. The first reason may be, that by his miraculous Fast hee might proue his calling, and the truth

[b] *In amorum numero* [Act. 9. 33.] *Beda & Glossa Ordinaria mysterium venantur, &c. in alterius numero,* [Ioh. 5. 5.] *Augustinus eandem fermè rationem mysticam excogitauit. Venerer, vt debeo, sanctos Patres: sed subtiliores numerorũ perstrutationes (vt verum fatear) nunquam valdè probaui, &c.* Lorin. in Act. 9. 33.

truth of his doctrine. For seeing he fasted aboue the strength of nature, it must needes follow that he did it by the power of God. And God would not assist him with a miraculous power in the entrance of his Office, vnlesse himselfe did approue and allow of his calling. The further declaration of which reason may be seene in a like example of *Moses*. For when *Moses* made scruple of going to the Israelites with Gods message, because hee feared lest they would not beleeue that God had sent him: God armeth him with a power of doing miracles, that hereby hee might conuince and perswade them. And [a] *If* (saith God) *they will not beleeue thee, nor hearken to the voyce of the first signe; yet they will beleeue the voyce of the later signe.* Where wee may note two things. First, that the end of these miracles was to credit *Moses* his Ministery, and to make the people beleeue him. Secondly, that these miraculous workes haue *a voyce*, whereby they speake vnto men; *If* (saith hee) *they will not hearken to the voyce of the first signe.* But what *voyce* is that? and how do these dumbe signes speake? Sure, they say and speake, or rather proclaime it with an *audible voyce*, that hee who doth these workes, hath the assistance of Gods Spirit to worke them. For [b] *no man* (as saith *Nicodemus*) *can doe these miracles that thou doest, except GOD be with him.* And, [c] *If this man were not of God* (saith the blind man now conuerted) *hee could doe nothing*; that is, he could doe nothing in this miraculous manner. These miracles then of *Moses* were as so many shrill *voy-*

(a) Exod. 4. 8.

(b) Ioh. 3. 2.

(c) Ioh. 9. 33.

ces

ces or lowd-sounding cryes from heauen, which proclaymed in the eares of all men, *This man is of God, and the Lord is with him.* And so vpon the same ground, our Lord proueth his calling by his miracles. [a] *If* (saith hee) *I doe not the workes of my Father, beleeue mee not. But if I doe, though yee beleeue not mee, beleeue the workes.* And if Christ and *Moses* did proue their callings to bee from God, by the miraculous workes that God wrought by them: what should let vs to thinke, but seeing Christ in the very entrance of his Office did vse a miraculous Fast, that hee therefore did it to proue that hee was sent from God, and did preach that truth that God had taught him?

[a] Ioh. 10. 37, 38.

2. A second reason of this long fasting in our Sauiour, may be, because before so extraordinary a worke as hee was then to enter vpon, hee thought fit to vse an extraordinary preparation, such as this long fasting might serue for. For that he now fasted to prepare himselfe for his publike Office, I haue declared already in the last Chapter: and that extraordinary occasions doe require extraordinary preparations, may appeare by obseruation of Scriptures. For we reade, that when the people were to serue God at ordinary times of deuotion, an ordinary preparation sufficed, such as that which *Salomon* speaketh of, [b] *Keepe thy foote when thou goest to the House of God, and bee more ready to heare, than to giue the sacrifice of fooles*: and that which our Sauiour requireth, [c] *Take heed how yee heare.* But when they were to receiue the Law from Gods owne mouth, and

[b] Eccles. 5. 1.

[c] Luk. 8. 18.

to

to heare him speaking in Maiesty, with thundring and lightning and trumpets; then God appoynteth that they should be prepared [a] for two whole dayes together, and commandeth that *they wash their clothes, and abstaine from their wiues.* And when they were to eate the Passeouer, they were to [b] prepare the Lambe, and to fit themselues for it foure dayes before. And when *Moses* was to goe vp to God into the Mount, [c] hee stayed sixe dayes in the side of the Mount, before hee was admitted to speake with God: and hee *stayed forty dayes* in all, before hee could receiue the two Tables, and bring the Law to the people. All which time, we cannot imagine eyther that hee was idle, or busied about impertinent affaires that concerned not that occasion: yea, and Scriptures do say, that for that time, he [d] exercised himselfe in *prayer* and *fasting*. And so in like sort, seeing our Lord was to enter vpon the greatest worke and office that euer man went about; the preaching of the Gospell to all the world, the opposing of the Deuill and euill men, and the redeeming of mankinde by his owne blood: it is not vnreasonable to thinke that hee would make his preparation answerable to his worke, and extend his fasting beyond an ordinary and vsuall time. And because God did enable him with a miraculous power to hold out for *forty dayes*, he was willing to vndergoe it all the while, though in the meane time hee defrauded nature of her vsuall comfort and refreshing.

(a) Exod. 19. 10,15.

(b) Exod. 12. 3,6.

(c) Exod. 24. 16,18.

(d) Deut. 9. 9,18.

And hence we haue this note for our further

direction in this exercise, that as fasting serueth for many good vses in Religion; so longer time of abstinence and more strict fasting and greater humiliation is requisit, when there is any more than ordinary or vsuall occasion. And so the old people of God were wont to doe. For vpon ordinary occasions, they vsed to fast one day from morning till night: but vpon extraordinary for a longer space. Thus *Ester*, when a weighty businesse was in hand that concerned her life, and the liues of her people; she appoynted a Fast for *three dayes and three nights*. And the men of Iabesh Gilead, when they had a great cause of heauinesse by the death of *Saul*, and the ouerthrow of the Army, they *fasted for seuen dayes space*. And *Daniel*, when the Church was distressed, and in great calamity, hee *fasted for three weekes* together. And so wee should extend our fast, and keepe it with more strict obseruation, and set more time apart for holy exercises; when either we are about some weighty businesse, or be in some great danger, or haue fallen into some hainous sinne; or haue a speciall cause to remember & celebrate the pangs and passion of our Sauiour, or happen vpon some other occasion of more than ordinary sorrow. Thus, what-euer our occasions be, fasting is still of vse in the life of a Christian: if the occasion be ordinary, ordinary fasting is a fitting exercise eyther to auert euill, or procure good; and if the occasion be extraordinary, then as the other exercises of Religion, so this among the rest, is to be vsed in a more than ordinary measure.

Chap. VIII.

When a Christian may or should fast.

CONcerning the Fast of our Saviour it is recorded, that hee then fasted, when hee was to encounter with Satan, and goe about his publique Ministery, and to begin the great worke of our Redemption: and vpon such vrgent occasions, and when there is such extraordinary cause offered; all men grant that then wee also may and ought to fast for the speedier procuring of Gods fauour. But this example of Christ, ministreth iust occasion to enquire further, whether, beside times of such vnusuall accidents, a Christian also may not lawfully and profitably obserue set times of fasting. And this is a question doubted of by some in our Church, and disputed with arguments and reasons on both sides. For clearing which doubt, wee are first of all to declare the meaning of the question; and that may appeare by these two notes.

1. That some there be which commend fasting for a religious exercise, if it bee vsed onely then, when men shall vpon seuerall occasions see it to be conuenient; but any standing dayes, whether appoynted by publique authoritie, or vndertaken by a mans owne priuate deuotion, these they vterly condemne as superstitious and Monkish.

For example, When *Ionas* prophecied of iudge-
(a) Ion. 3.6,7. ment against Nineueh, [a] the King *proclaymed a fast*, and the people obserued it. And this they approue of, and allow our Magistrates vpon such
(b) Nehem. 1. 3, 4. an occasion to doe the like. Againe, when [b] *Nehemiah* heard that the Iewes were *in great affliction and reproch*; and that the *wall of Ierusalem was broken downe, and the gates thereof burnt with fire: he sate downe and wept, and mourned certaine daies, and fasted.* And this they approue of, and allow euery priuate Christian by his example, vpon such occasions as these, to fast out of his owne deuotion. But now further, the ancient Christian Church, in remembrance of Christs death on that day, did appoynt euery *Fryday* to bee kept fasting-day; and for the same and some other reasons, they appoynted the time of *Lent*, as often as it should happen, to be obserued with *abstinence* and *fasting*. And these and such like standing and set-times they allow not.

Secondly, Wee must note that the obseruing and appoynting of these dayes may be meant and vnderstood two wayes; eyther with opinion of *necessitie* or *sanctitie* in those times, more than in other. And this is not here questioned; nor doe wee doubt but the Church, as it appoynted the *Fryday*, so if it had pleased, might haue appointed any other day for this exercise: nor do we thinke that there is any peculiar *sanctitie* in that day more than in others. Or else the question may bee vnderstood of the *lawfulnesse* and conueniency of appoynting such set dayes and times, for *order* sake,

sake, and for the more constant performance of this worke. And this is it, which we meane in this question.

The question then is, Whether it be lawfull for Authority to prescribe, or for priuate men to vndertake set and standing dayes for fasting; that it may be obserued the more orderly and the more constantly? And mine answere is, That it is both lawfull and expedient for Gouernours to enioyne their Inferiours, and for priuate men to prescribe vnto themselues such standing times, so often as they shall fall, either weekely, or monethly, or yeerely, as they see it expedient. And my proofes are, some from Scriptures, some from examples, and some from reason grounded on Scripture.

I. From Scriptures. And thence I alledge two places for this purpose.

1. The first is *Leuit.* 16. For there God appointeth *the tenth day of the seuenth moneth* to bee kept for a fasting day; and saith moreouer, [a] *This shall be a statute for euer vnto you*: and againe, *This shall be an euerlasting statute vnto you, to make atonement once a yeere.* Heere we see, that God appointed vnto the Iewes a set fasting day, to bee kept euery yeere as oft as it should happen. And hence I argue thus; Almighty God himself did appoint, and thought it a profitable course for his people of the Iewes, to obserue a set and standing day for a Fast euery yeere. And therefore a set time of fasting may bee obserued without superstition and sinne.

(a) Leu. 16. 29, 34

Some answere, that this was a Legall precept

of *Moses*, which is now abolished by Christ. And I reply; It is true that this precept in respect of that particular time, was Legall, and had its end in Christs death: but it is no lesse true also, that God in making and appointing that Legall precept, did not command them any thing, which in it selfe is superstitious and sinfull. And therefore, because God prescribed them a set time for that Fast, it followeth, that the appointing of a set time of fasting, is not in it selfe superstitious and sinfull.

2. The second place that may serue for proofe of this point, is out of the Prophesie of *Zacharie*; (a) Zach. 8. 19. where we finde mention of foure seuerall fasting dayes, obserued euery yeere by the Iewes in their knowne and appointed moneths. Concerning which Fast thus much is first of al to be noted, that they were[b] occasioned by the calamities that befel the Iewes about the time, when they were carried captiues into *Babylon*, or before that time; and were appointed, as some thinke, by some Prophet from heauen; or as others, by the authority or consent of the present Church; and (as the Learned generally doe confesse) were allowed of and approued by almighty God himselfe. And hence I reason thus; The Iewes did lawfully obserue foure seuerall set daies euery yeere, for daies of fasting. And therefore it is not alwayes superstitious and sinfull to obserue set fasting dayes.

(b) Hieron. in Zach. 8. 18, 19. pag. 486. Buxd. Synag. Iudaic. c. 25. Genebrar. Calend. Hebr. Sept. 3: Dec. 10. Iun. 27, & Iulij 9.

Some againe answere, that these Fasts were appointed vpon occasion of their present calamities in *Babylon*, and ceased at their deliuerance. My re-

ply

ply is, that I see no proofe, that these Fasts did cease to be obserued after the Iewes were deliuered out of captiuity. The contrary may seeme more probable, because in the [a] Kalender of the Iewes, wherein their Feasts and Fasts are noted, these foure dayes remaine still, as beeing in vse among the Iewes. And [b] *Buxdorfius*, a man well acquainted with the manners and customes of the Iewes, telleth vs, that the Iewes *to this day do keepe those fasting dayes*, which are there mentioned by the Prophet. But say, that they ceased vpon the peoples deliuerance, yet it is not true, that they were appointed vpon occasion of their present miseries in *Babylon*; for other dayes might haue beene as fit for that purpose, and perhaps more conuenient then these: but as the learned obserue, by occasion of some miserable accidents, which befalling them but once, did moue them to fast the same daies that those accidents happened, for many yeeres after. And if those Fasts did last no longer then the time of their captiuity, because all that while they had iust cause to humble themselues in remembrance of these euils: yet thus much will follow from thence, that therefore vpon occasion of a sorrowfull accident which hath once befalne vs, we may for euer after fast that set day, so long as we haue cause to be humbled in remembrance of it. And hence againe it will follow, that therefore *Good-Friday* may euery yeere constantly be kept for a fasting day, because it was occasioned by the death of Christ for our sinnes, and we shall neuer want iust cause to bee humbled in

(a) Calendar Hebræorum edito à Genebrardo, & præfixo Cõment. in Psalmos.

[b] *Hæc sunt festa quatuor ista communissima, quibus Iudæi tempore Prophetæ Zachariæ ieiunarũt, & adhuc annis singulis ordinariè summariè, ieiunant.* Buxd. Synagog. Iudaic. cap. 25.

in remembrance hereof, so long as the world lasteth; because, besides our old sinnes, we doe euery yeere commit many moe new ones, which helped to nayle our Sauiour to the Crosse. The like might be said of some other the like dayes. And therefore, there is warrant in Scriptures for set and standing times of fasting.

II. My second proofe is from approued examples of Gods Church, both in the time of the Law, and in the time of the Gospell. For in the time of the Law, the Iewish Church kept their set dayes of abstinence, as besides the Easts now mentioned out of the Prophet, may further appeare by the words of the Gospell. For there it is said, that *the Disciples of Iohn and of the Pharises did fast often*, and more particularly of the Pharises, that they fasted *twise a weeke*. Now as [a] *Caluin* concludeth, that *Daniel* had his set & prefixed houres of praying, because it is said that *hee prayed three times a day*: So may I hence inferre, that the Pharises kept set dayes of fasting, because it is said of them, that they *fasted twise euery weeke*. And [b] *Kemnitius* gathereth from the ninth of Saint *Mathew*, that both the Pharises and the Disciples of *Iohn* had [*certa & stata tempora ieiuniorum*] *set and standing times for their Fasts*. Now that this practice of theirs is an approued example for vs, appeareth, first because our Lord, when he reproueth their errours in their Fast, yet findeth no fault with this. And secondly, because he excused his Disciples for not fasting as the Pharises and *Iohns* Disciples did, from the vnseasonablenes of the time,

(a) Caluin. in Dan. 6. 10.

(a) Exā. part. 4. de Tempore Ieiun. nu. 54. pa. 95. 1.

and

and promised, that after-ward, when the time was fitting, they should then fast. And this sheweth, that our Lord was so farre from condemning the Pharises and *Iohns* Disciples, that he excuseth his Disciples for not doing the like. Againe in the time of the Gospell, the Christian Church hath still had her standing and set dayes for fasting, as the time of *Lent* euery yeere, and the *Friday* euery weeke, and some others; as is so apparent, that it cannot be denyed, nor needs not to be proued. And these set times haue beene commended by many holy and learned Fathers of the Church, but were neuer disliked by any of them, that euer I could finde. And so in conclusion, in the iudgement of Gods Church, both before and since Christs appearing in the flesh (which heerein was neuer blamed by Christ, or his Apostles, or the learned Fathers) it is no sinne to keepe set dayes of fasting.

III. The third proofe is taken from reason grounded on the authority of Scriptures. And my reasons in that kinde shall be these two.

1. Nothing is sinfull, but that which is forbidden by Gods Law: for *Sinne is the transgression of the Law*, as the Apostle defineth it. But to keep set dayes of fasting, is no where forbidden by any Lawe of God. It followeth; And therefore to keepe such dayes is no sinne. (a) 1 Ioh. 3. 4.

Against this Argument nothing can be excepted, vnlesse some Text of Gods Law can be shewed, which condemneth or forbiddeth the obseruation of such standing times. And for that pur-

(a) Gal. 4. 10. pose, some obiect the place of Saint *Paul*, [a] *Yee obserue dayes and moneths and times and yeeres. I am afraid of you, lest I haue bestowed on you labour in vaine.* But to this the reply is easie; and may be borrowed out of *Beza*: for he expounding a like place in Saint *Paul*, *One man esteemeth one day aboue another; another esteemeth euery day alike*; the Apostle heere (saith this learned man) [b] *doth not speake of euery difference of dayes, but of that only, which is prescribed in Moses his Law, as is apparent by that which is written,* [*Coloss.* 2. 16.] *Let no man iudge you in meate or in drinke, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moone, or of the Sabbath dayes: which are a shaddow of things to come, &c.* And so I say, The Apostle in the place alledged, doth not speake of euery obseruing of dayes and times, but such onely as was prescribed by *Moses*, and is abolished by Christ. And this exposition of this place is as directly prooued by that other to the *Colossians*, as that whereof *Beza* speaketh. The place then alledged, doth not proue that standing times of fasting are forbidden by Gods Law.

[b] *Agit non de quouis dierum discrimine, sed de eo demum quod in Lege Mosis præcipitur; vt apparet ex eo, quod scriptum est Coloss.* 2. 16. Beza in Rom. 14. 6.

Arg. 2. The keeping of set times for the doing of holy duties, is a thing found to be profitable and vsefull in the life of a Christian: because it may serue for the more constant performance of them. This I declare thus. *Dauid* in the Psalmes (c) Psal. 55. 17. saith, [c] *Euening, and morning, and at noone will I pray and cry aloud.* And *Caluin* commenting on that place, giueth vs this note, *We may gather* from hence (saith he) [*status fuisse pijs horas ad precandum istis temporibus;*] *that the godly had their set*

houres

houres for prayer at those times: which they obserued the rather in their priuate deuotions, because God had appoynted them to be obserued in the publike seruice of the Temple. For a morning and euening euery day, the Priests offered the daily sacrifice: and *the mid-day*, as that learned Writer noteth, *was allotted for other sacrifices*. And the reason hereof (saith he) is this; [b] *Because we are dull, and backward in prayer; vnlesse we bee spurred on, this worthy seruice would soone decay, & we would quickly forget it, vnlesse wee had some bridle to keepe vs in.* He addeth, And *therefore God to help our infirmity, hath set vs certain houres to remember vs of our dutie. And the same reason may as iustly bee applyed to our priuate prayers at home.* Againe, where it is said of *Daniel*, that *he kneeled vpon his knees three times a day, and prayed and gaue thankes, as hee did aforetime*: the same learned Writer commenteth thus vpon that place, [*Hoc quoq; obseruatu dignum est,*] *this also is worth the noting*, that *Daniel* prayed three times a day; [c] *because vnlesse euery one of vs doe prescribe himselfe set houres for prayer, wee shall easily forget it. And therefore Daniel, though he were frequent in powring out his prayers, yet did impose vpon himselfe this solemne taske, that he would prostrate himselfe before God three times euery day.*

In which discourses of this learned and iudicious Interpreter, I note two things. 1. That as God did prescribe certaine and *set houres* for his publike seruice, so in imitation hereof, good men did doe the like in their priuate and domesticke prayers. 2. That the reason of both was, because if

(a) Exod. 29. 38.

b *Quia sumus aequo tardiores ad orandum; nisi quisq; seipsum sollicitet & urgeat, praecipuum hoc pietatis officium apud nos frigebit, adeoq; obrepet peccandi obliuio, nisi nos freno aliquo retineamus. Deus ergo certas horas praefigens, infirmitati nostrae mederi voluit: quae eadem ratio transferri debet ad priuatas preces, sicut patet ex hoc loco, cui etiam respondet Danielis exemplum.* Caluin. in Psa. 55. 18.

c *Quia nisi quisque nostrum praefigat sibi certas horas ad precandum, facilè nobis excidet memoriâ. Daniel ergo quâquam assiduus erat in precibus fundendis, tamen solennem hunc ritum sibi iniunxit, vt ter quotidie sese prosterneret coram Deo.* Caluin. in Dã. 6. 10.

if men be left to their liberty, they quickly forget their duty, and neglect the performance of that at all times, which they thinke they may doe as well at any other time. The like is noted by *Polanus* also. For first he moueth a doubt concerning *Daniels* practice; [a] *Whether it were not superstitious that Daniel did thus (as it were) tye his prayers to certain houres, as if God would not heare men at what time soeuer they called vpon him*: And then he answereth, *that the holy Prophet, though he minded God at all times, yet set apart to himselfe certaine houres for prayer, (most free for this businesse) without any opinion of sanctity, or merit, or necessity in those times, as if the strict obseruation of those three times were more acceptable to God then other times, or had merit and necessitie in it.* In which answere he defendeth *Daniel* from all tincture of superstition, because though he prescribed himselfe set times, yet hee had no opinion of *sanctity* or *necessity* in those times more then in other: and by consequence doth allow vs to vse set times for holy duties, so we place not holines or necessity in those precise times. And againe not long after, [b] *Prayer vnto God*, saith he, *should be continuall, and without intermission: but yet seeing our infirmity is great, and our forgetfulnes to pray is too too much, for helping of our infirmitie and memory, it is necessary that euery one of vs, should destinate vnto himselfe certaine times for making of his prayers.*

[a] *Annon superstitiosum fuerit, quòd Daniel preces suas certis horis quasi alligauit, perinde ac si Deus non exaudiret quocunq; tempore inuocantes. Resp. Certum est tam sanctum Prophetam nunquam non de Deo suo cogitasse, etiã quũ negotia Regni tractauit; destinauit tamen sibi certa ad precandum tempora, quæ à politicis negotijs vacua esse poterant & solebant, vt citra vlla impedimenta coram Deo suo sese sisteret, absq; vlla opinione vel sanctitatis alicuius quæ temporibus illis ineſſet, vel cultus vel meriti, vel necessitatis, quasi obseruatio strictarum illorum temporum præ aliis Deo grata esset, & aliquid mercretur, & necessaria esset.*

Polan in Dan 6.11 pag 177. [b] *Adoratio Dei assidua quidem esse debet, &c. Sed tamen, quũ nostra infirmitas sit ingens, & ad precandum obliuio nimia, dum huius vitæ negotia curamus; vt infirmitati nostræ & memoriæ consulatur, necessarium est vt quisq; nostrum certa sibi tempora destinet precibus concipiendis, &c.* Polan, in Dan. 6.11. loco de Adorat. aphoris. 6. pag. 284.

Now

Now out of these obseruations of theirs concerning prayer, I inferre three conclusions concerning fasting. 1. If it be lawfull and religious to prescribe set houres for prayer; then it cannot be sinfull and superstitious to obserue set daies for fasting. For the fault in these set dayes, if there bee any, is not becausse they are dayes or houres, but becausse they are set and standing times. And that exception is as iust against houres as dayes. Nor is the exception against fasting only, but against feasting too, and all other such exercises, if they be tied to fixed times. If set houres then be allowed for praying, set dayes cannot be condemned in fasting. 2. If set times for prayer bee so helpefull for the due performing of that worke; then set times of humiliation cannot bee so hurtfull, as to marre and corrupt that good worke. 3. If to be left at liberty for the times of our praying, bee so dangerous to breed an vtter neglect of it: then to leaue times of fasting to each mans present choyce, will not be so safe, nor without feare of neglecting this necessary duety. For there is much more feare of neglect in fasting, than in praying; becausse it is more painefull to the flesh, and therefore men will be more ready to shift it off vpon euery sleight and idle occasion. Which would God it were but a surmise of mine, and that experience had not proued it to be most true. For wee all confesse that there is great vse of fasting, when eyther sinnes doe abound, or iudgements are to be feared, or blessings are to be sought for: and none of vs can thinke or will say,

but that in all these respects, there hath beene of late yeeres, and is at this day too great occasion offered for such humiliation. And yet now that euery man is left to himselfe to fast when he will; who almost is there, euen among them that are counted religious, who finde themselues willing to vse any fasting at all? And hence I inferre, that arbitrary times of fasting are as like to breed a neglect of this duetie, as arbitrary times of praying to make that duetie forgotten. Fourthly, If *Daniels* set houres were free from *superstition*, because hee vsed them [*absque vlla opinione sanctitatis*, *without any opinion of holinesse*] in that time: then the Church of England cannot bee charged with *superstition*, for her set dayes of fasting; because shee vseth these without placing sanctitie in those times. And now out of all these considerations I may boldly conclude the poynt, that set times of fasting are not onely lawfull, but very expedient for the constant and religious practice of humiliation. And indeed experience sheweth, that exercises which stand in a continued practice and often reiterating of them, are then performed with most diligence, and greatest fruit, when they haue their fixed and set times allotted vnto them. My selfe, when I liued in the Vniuersity among Scholers, did obserue that it was held for a note of a good Student, that allowing himself fit time for sleepe and recreation, and such like necessary workes, the rest of his houres remaining, hee did destinate and assigne for seuerall exercises and studies his such houres for Logick or Philosophy,

and such for Oratory or Poetry; and such for History or Geography, &c. By which fixed order, and constant obseruing of their appoynted times, such Students gayned great furtherance for their Studies, which others wanted. For first, they tooke order that no seasonable time should be mis-spent without making profit: but taking a view of their whole time, they allotted euery houre to some vse. Secondly, when their houre was come for such or such a businesse, the very striking of the Clock did admonish them to breake off company, and presently to betake themselues to their taske: whereas others, who had no such set houres, would goe beyond the time, and in chatting and idlenesse trifle away many a good houre without taking account of it. Thirdly, when they were come to their studies, they knew what they had to doe, and without further deliberation went on with their worke: whereas some others, when they came to their studies, were scarce resolued what booke fitted their turne, and so for want of orderly proceeding, they lost the fruit of that little time and small paynes which they tooke. And fourthly, if at any time, eyther occasion of friends, or occurrence of some businesse did intercept their time, and beguile them of their houres, they were sensible of that losse, and did watch all opportunities to re-gaine it. And by this set course of study, such Students in short time gayned much knowledge, and farre exceeded their fellowes. And as this hath been found in experience to be the readiest way for a Scho-

ler to profit in his learning: so for my part, I know no better way of thriuing and profiting in Christs Schoole, then if wee obserue the same rule, and set our selues conuenient times for doing of religious dueties: as such a time to pray with our houshold, and such a time to reade Scriptures and other bookes of Religion, and such a time to examine our consciences and see what we haue done, and such a time to fast and vse humiliation for our sinnes. For it may be feared, if wee appoynt our selues no set times for good dueties, wee will spend but a little time about them.

The consideration of all which maketh mee to thinke, that the obseruation of set times for our Fasting-dayes, is so farre from corrupting our Fasts with *superstition*, as that it doth much further vs to a constant and religious practice of them.

CHAP. IX.

How long wee should continue our Fast.

OVr Lord continued his Fast for *forty dayes and forty nights*: but that was miraculous and aboue the power of nature in him, and therfore is not to be imitated by vs in the same manner. Yet iust occa-

sion

ſion is offered to enquire how long our Faſts ought to bee continued. For diſtinct anſwere whereto, wee muſt note a difference betweene Faſts of ordinary or vſuall continuance, and of extraordinary and vnuſuall.

And to begin firſt with the later; vnuſuall and extraordinary I call that, which is for longer time and ſpace, than is commonly vſed, or is ordinarily expedient. In this kinde *Paul* [a] *faſted three dayes* in Damaſcus; and *Mordecai* and the Iewes *faſted* for *Eſter* [b] *three daies and three nights.* And for the continuance of ſuch Faſts, I cannot preciſely ſay, for how many dayes and houres they are to be obſerued; onely theſe two things I can ſay in the generall. 1. That they muſt bee no longer than the ſtrength and power of mans nature may beare; as I haue ſhewed already. 2. That the ſpace of their continuance is to bee meaſured by the occaſion that requireth them, and by the deuotion and diſcretion of them that keepe them.

(a) Act.9.9.

(b) Eſter 4.16, 17.

2. Secondly, the vſuall continuance of a Faſt I call it, when the abſtinence is obſerued ſo long as is vſuall among Gods ſeruants in their ordinary courſe of life, and is commonly practized by them in their religious Faſts. And for determining the ſpace of ſuch a Faſt, ſome ſay that a religious Faſt muſt bee continued for foure and twenty houres: and the reaſon is, becauſe on the day of *Expiation*, God doth enioyne abſtinence *from euening to euening*. But of this place I haue told my opinion before, and now againe I ſay

vnder correction, firſt, that this place requireth that ſpace of time for the celebrating of a Sabbath or Feſtiuall day; but ſaith not the like of a Faſting-day. Secondly, If the Faſt there mentioned, be meant to continue for foure and twentie houres, as I will not deny but it may be ſo taken; yet that is required in this Faſt, as it was a ſeruice belonging to an holy day, not as it was an abſtinence required on a Faſting-day. And therefore it was enioyned in this Faſt, but is not ſo in all Faſts. Hee ſpeaketh more reſonably as I take it, that ſaith, [a] *A true Faſt is an abſtinence or forbearing eyther of dinner vntill euening, or of ſupper vntill dinner time the next day; or elſe, of both of them together.* But yet for more diſtinct conceiuing of the poynt, I will ſet downe mine opinion, with ſubmiſſion to better iudgements, in three ſeuerall propoſitions.

a. *Verum & bonum ieiunium eſt abſtinentia ſpontanea ſiue prandij vſque ad veſperam, ſiue cœnæ vſque ad ſequentis diei prandium, ſiue vtriuſque ſimul prandij et cœnæ, &c.* Springl. de Hodier. Hæreticis, part. 1. l. 3. cap. 2. pag. 842.

1. The preciſe time and diſtinct houres how long a Faſt muſt be continued, is not any where that I know of, peremptorily defined or commanded, eyther in the holy Scriptures, or in any Writings of the Ancients. For as for the Scriptures, wee finde examples of ſome that haue faſted *for three dayes*, and many that haue faſted *till night*: but where eyther that ſpace or any other is commanded, for my part, I confeſſe, I know not. And for the ancient Church it is a cleare caſe, that they vſed to faſt, ſomtime till euening, and many times but till three a clocke in the afternoone. Which ſheweth, that they thought no ſet ſpace of time abſolutely neceſſary.

2. In

2. In euery religious Fast, the abstinence must be continued so long, as that the body by wanting his ordinary food, may bee in some sort chastened and afflicted. For so the Scriptures set out a Fast vnto vs, as accompanied with chastening and humiliation. Thus *Dauid* speaketh, [a] *I wept and chastened my soule with fasting.* And the Angell speaking of *Daniels* Fast, [b] *When thou didst set thine heart* (saith hee) *to vnderstand, and to chasten thy selfe before thy God.* And *Ezrah*, [c] *I proclaymed a Fast, that wee might afflict our selues before God.* By all which and other moe sayings to like purpose, it is apparant, that in euery true Fast there is an afflicting of the body. Which how it is to be vnderstood, I haue declared [d] elsewhere.

(a) Psal. 69. 10.

(b) Dan. 10. 12.

(c) Ezrah. 8. 21.

(d) Cap. 4. pa. 49. &c.

3. The longer our abstinence is, (so it bee with moderation and regard to a mans strength; such as heretofore I described) the more perfect the Fast is, and the more auaileable for the good which we intend by it. My reasons are. First, because fasting is ordained for humiliation and *chastening* of our selues before God, which the more sensible it is, the more effectuall it proueth: but the longer the abstinence is, the greater is the humiliation or *chastening* that is wrought by it. And therefore, the longer the abstinence, the perfiter the Fast is. Secondly, Vpon extraordinary occasions, and when greater need required; then Gods seruants haue been accustomed to enlarge the time of their fasting, as I haue shewed before in *Ester*, and the men of Iabesh, &c. And this sheweth, that the longer the abstinence is, the

more powerfull the Faſt is. Thirdly, The ancient Church did vſe longer abſtinence in Lent time, than on other Faſting-dayes; intending therein, as in all the other religious duties, to ſhew more piety than at other times they vſed. And this ſheweth that the longer the abſtinence is, the more perfit they thought the Faſt to be. Fourthly, this concluſion is acknowledged by our Aduerſaries of the Romiſh Church. For though they defend the looſeneſſe of their Church, which permitteth them on Faſting-dayes to take their dinner at the vſuall time; yet they confeſſe, [a] that by how much later the houre of our eating is, by ſo much our Faſt is the better, and that they know well enough, that the Faſt is ſo much the more perfit, by how much the refection after it, is the longer protracted.

4. The vſuall time of abſtinence mentioned in Scriptures, in an vſuall and ordinary Faſt, is the ſpace of one day from morning till night. Thus it is ſaid of the children of Iſrael, [b] that *they wept, and ſate before the Lord, and faſted that day vntill euen*: and of *Dauid* and his men, [c] that *they faſted vntill euen for Saul, and for Ionathan, &c.* and of *Dauid*, when hee mourned for *Abner*, that hee would not be perſwaded by the people to eate meat, while it was yet day, but ſware, ſaying, [d] *So doe God to mee, and more alſo, if I taſte bread or ought elſe, till the Sunne bee downe.* And ſo elſewhere. And according to this cuſtome it is obſerued of the Iewes, that euer ſince, they haue kept their Faſt, [e] till the Starres appeare in the Firma-

ment.

a *Quò quis tardiùs diſtulerit, eò melius ieiunare iudicandus eſt.* Valer. Reginald. prax. fori pœnit. l. 4. c. 13. num. 158. *Quantò plus tardâ horâ comeditur, melius ieiunatur.* Caietan v. Ieiun. pag. 120. *Neque ignorant Catholici ieiunium tantò eſſe perfectius, quantò diutius refectio ſiue Cœna differtur.* Bellar. de bon. oper. in partic. l. 2. cap. 2. pag. 1072. B.

(b) Iudg. 20. 26.

(c) 2. Sam. 1. 12.

(d) 2. Sam. 3. 35.

(e) Buxdorf. Synag. Iudaic. cap. 25. pag. 458. Toſtat. in Matth. 4. q. 11. Azor. part. 1. l. 7. cap. 11. q. 1. pag. 563. col. 2.

ment. And lesse time of abstinence then this, I no where finde vsed in Scriptures.

5. In the Primitiue Church I finde, that in the beginning they fasted till sixe of the clocke in the afternoone, or till sun setting, which in common estimation is about sixe of the clocke. For that is the most indifferent time, to measure the euening by, & the most proportionable to the whole yeer, and most answerable to the custome of Gods people in the old Testament. For there was not such difference betweene the day and the night among the Iewes, as is among vs. For in *Iurie*, the shortest day had tenne houres, and the longest night but foureteene. Whence it followeth, that for the greatest part of the yeere, the sun did set much what about sixe, either not long after, or not long before it. And when the greatest inequality was, as in the depth of winter, it did set at fiue of the clocke, and in the height of summer at seuen. And therefore the most equall time to measure the end of the day or the sunne setting by for all the yeer, is sixe of the clocke. And that I take to haue bin the vsuall time, when both the Iewes and the ancient Christians did breake off their Fasts. But afterward Christians began to abridge the time of the abstinence, and to cease their Fasts, at least many of them, about three of the clocke in the afternoone. Which *Azorius* imputeth to decay of zeale euen in those better times, and I wil not deny but it might be so in some part: albeit perhaps another reason may be conceiued thereof besides, namely the multitude of their Fasts, which at that time

[a] *Tepescente sensim vetere illo feruore, cœptum est solui ieiunium, primò quidem antequam sol occideret, deinde verò etiã paucis horis ante solis abscessum.* Azor. par. 1. l. 7. c. 11. q. 1. pag. 563. 564.

time were frequent, especially among the religious sort who gaue themselues to deuotion. For they, sauing Sundayes and festiuall times, were vsed to fast euery day; and it might seeme perhaps too much strictnes, in such continuall sort, to endure so long abstinence: and therefore though in Lent time, and vpon other dayes of more straite discipline, they vsed to fast till night, yet ordinarily they broke off their Fasts three houres sooner. But if it were decay of zeale in those former Christians, that they ceased their Fasts before night, then it must needs be an extinction of zeale in the Romane Church, who breaketh her Fast at the vsuall time of eating: or rather doth not keepe any Fast so long.

And now out of all this, we haue in the generall this cleare and manifest conclusion, That though no precise time for continuance is prescribed in Gods Word, yet the continuance of a Fast, without eating or drinking till euening, (which by common estimation is held to be about sixe of the clocke) is approued of in Scriptures, and was practised by the ancient Christians, and commended of all: and that the shortening of this time, was from decay of deuotion. And therefore if wee would take a safe way, and that which is best approued of all, we must continue our abstinence on our fasting dayes, till night; without eating or drinking till about euening, vnlesse infirmity or some other necessary cause doe require refreshing sooner. But more particularly, we may from the former discourse gather and obserue these things following.

1. Wee may see, that the Fast of Protestants, which is continued in perfect abstinence from all meate and drinke till the euening, is more agreeable to the custome of Gods people in former ages, and is in it selfe, a better and more perfect Fast, then the Fast of Papists is, euen our Enemies being Iudges. For they praise it for a better Fast, which hath the longer abstinence: and we fast till night, whereas they doe not so much as forbeare eating till mid-day.

2. We may see, with how little God is contented at our hands, in respect of that which Christ performed for our sakes. For abstinence for the space of one day is accepted of God, for a good dutie of humiliation; but Christ our Lord fasted *forty dayes and forty nights* for the furthering of our saluation. And yet whereas Christ performed all this for our sakes, we think it too much to doe this little for his sake. Nay, as the Iewes were wearie of the Sabbath day, and times of Gods seruice, and said, [a] *When will the new-moone be gone, and the Sabbath, that we may set foorth wheat?* And againe, [b] *Behold what a wearinesse is it?* say they. And *ye haue snuffed at it, saith the Lord of Hosts.* So we may finde men, that when they come to heare a Sermon, are weary of hearing, and wish that the Sermon were ended before the time: and when they come to Church-Seruice, are weary of praying, and wish that the Seruice were ended before the time: but especially if they vndertake an holy Fast, are sooner wearie of the Abstinence, and wish that the fasting day were ended before the time.

(a) Amos 8. 5.

(b) Mal. 1. 13.

time. But a good Christian for discouering of his owne corruption, should take notice of this inequality between Christs sufferings for our sakes, and our suffering for his sake. And if the flesh grow weary of hearing or reading or praying or fasting for a conuenient & requisite time; he should check himselfe with the example of his Sauiour, and say to himselfe: But *my Lord and Master preached all day*, and *prayed all night*, and *fasted many dayes and nights* together for my sake; and shall I grudge to spend one houre, or one day in his seruice, & for his Names sake? The religious soule that shall thus now and then checke his owne dulnesse, will by the meditation heereof gaine more feruour in Gods seruice.

CHAP. X.

What we are to thinke of the Fast of Lent.

THe Church from the beginning hath been accustomed to keepe an annuall Fast euery yeere, commonly called [*Ieiunium Quadragesimale,*] *the fortie dayes Fast*; because it was continued about that number of dayes, and was occasioned by this *forty dayes Fast* of our Sauiour. Concerning which *Quadragesimal* or forty dayes Fast, known among vs by the name of *Lent*, or *Lent Fast*, haue bin diuers opinions of late yeeres, as there were diuers customes in keeping

ping of it in former times. For some haue magnified it too superstitiously, placing Religion in outward things onely; wherein the power of godlinesse could not consist: and others haue scrupulously condemned all vse of it, thinking that it could neuer be well vsed, which they had seene so much abused. In respect of which difference of opinions, as also and especially, because it is so proper to the argument in hand, and hath such reference to the words of the Euangelist, which I tooke for my ground; I thought it not vnfit in the last place to enquire into the nature & condi- of this *Lent Fast*, that amidst different opinions, we might know what to thinke. For which purpose I haue proposed to my selfe these 5 things to bee more particularly considered of.

1. *Who was the Author of it, and from whence the institution of it came.*
2. *How and in what sort it was kept in the ancient Church.*
3. *What good vses it then had, or now may haue among vs.*
4. *Why choyce was made of this season of the yeere for this Fast.*
5. *What relation and what dependance this* forty dayes Fast *of* Lent *hath on Christs Fast of* forty dayes *in the Wildernesse.*

1. The first thing is, Who was the Author of it, &c. *Answ.* I finde three speciall opinions concerning this point.

1. The first opinion is, that the Fast of Lent is of *Diuine* institution, either appointed immediately

ly by Christ himselfe, or else ordained by the Apostles with authority and by the commandement of their Lord and Master. [a] Of this opinion are many Popish Writers: and to this purpose some of the Fathers speeches are alledged, but their meaning is not that, which at first sight it may seeme to bee.

2. The second opinion is, that it is of *Apostolicall* but not *Diuine* institution. They meane that the Apostles did ordaine Lent-Fast, as beeing in their iudgements a wholesome and most conuenient order, but not as being any commandement receiued from God or from Iesus Christ. And of this opinion are not a fewe of the latter Popish Doctors. [b]

3. The third opinion is, that it is an ancient *Ecclesiasticall* Order, begun in the Church after the Apostles time, and consequently, that it may not be called either *Diuine* or *Apostolicall*; vnlesse we will call it *Apostolicall*, becaus it is a very ancient Order, whose beginning and institution is vnknowne: as such like orders are many times called Apostolicall, and referred to their institution. Of this opinion is [c] *Cassianus*, an ancient Writer, and [d] diuers learned men in the reformed Churches.

That which I conceiue most probable, I will set downe in three distinct and seuerall assertions:

[a] *Dominus noster sanctis suis Apostolis per Spiritũ S. id etiam inspiranit, vt disertis verbis huius abstinentiæ præceptum populo Christiano proponeret.* Pisan. de Absti. cap. 9. pa. 138. v. Filesa. de Quadrag. ca. 1. Ant. Liturg. tom. 2. Sabb. post Cineres, pag. 117. &c. & Azor. p. 1 lib. 7. cap. 12. q. 1.

[b] *Non fuit datũ subsequentibus temporibus, sed ab ipsis Apostolis initio nascentis Ecclesiæ, &c.* Val. Reginal. Prax. fori pœnit. l. 4. ca. 12. nu. 129. p. 148. v. et Vas. to. 3. in 3. Disp. 213. nu. 4. pag. 444. 2. Ioh. Medina Cod. de leiun. quæst. 2. pa. 328. Less. de Iustit. & Iure. l. 4. c. 2. Dubitat. 5. num. 29. & seqq. pa. 722. 2. Filliuc. Tract. 27. para. 2. ca. 5. nu. 77, 78. & nu. 95. Bell. de bo. oper. in partic. l. 2. cap. 14. Stapl. prompt. Cathol. Domin. 1. Quadrag. p. 84, 85. Tost. Mat. 4. q. 18. Barrad. to. 2. l. 2. c. 2. pa 61. Beerlyn. promp. para 3. in festo Cinerũ, Text. 3. Azor. part. 1. l. 7. c. 12.

[c] Collat. 21. c. 30. [d] Fest. Hom. Disp. 69. nu. 4. p. 469. Kem. Exã. par. 4. de leiu. tit. quomodo vetus Eccl. leiun. &c. pag. 125. Nicol. Vedel. Exer. 10. in Ignat. epist. ad Phil. c. 3. nu. 11. pag. 60. & nu. 19. pag. 67.

but

but with submission to better indgement.

1. *Pro.* It is certaine that the obseruation of Lent was very ancient and receiued throughout the whole Christian Church. For whosoeuer shal peruse the writings of the Fathers, shall finde mention of it, in men of all countries, and euen as neere to the Apostles times, as any Monuments or Records of the Church doe reach.

2. *Propos.* It is not certaine that it was either appoynted or obserued by the Apostles of Christ, as any Rule or Order agreed vpon by them for the vse of the Church. My reasons are.

(1.) Because no man, who liued in their time, or within that age, doth say it, nor can any other tell, which of them, or in what manner, or with what instructions they either ordained or obserued it. And to say, that therefore it is of the Apostles institution, because no other Author is knowne, is a coniecture that may faile vs.

(2.) [a] Because the Fast of Lent was anciently obserued in diuers Churches and Countries after a very diuerse and different maner. For first, there was a difference in the number of weekes appointed for this vse: some obseruing eight weekes, some seuen, some sixe, and some, as we now doe, sixe weekes and foure dayes. Secondly, there was difference in the fasting daies of Lent; for in some places, they fasted euery day, saue Sunday; in some other, euery day, except Saturday and Sunday; in some other, euery second day; and in some, but euery other weeke onely. For on those other dayes in Lent, though they abstained from some

(a) V. Filesac. de Quadrag. c. 2. & seqq. v. etiã Vedel. Exerc. 10. in Ignat. ep. ad Philip. cap. 3. nu. 11. & seqq.

some meats, yet they did eate their dinner; and then the Ancients thought it to be no fasting day. Now if there had been any set order agreed vpon by the Apostles for the practice of the Church, in all likelyhood, there could not haue beene such variety in so short a time. It may be, I deny not, that the Apostles, who were frequent in fastings, (as Saint *Paul* speaketh of himselfe, 2 *Cor.* 11.27.) did vse it at this time more frequently and for longer time, then at other times of the yeere; because they were now occasioned to remember the sufferings of their Master, and anon after to celebrate his Resurrection. And this practice might perhaps giue occasion to the Churches abroad, to take example by them, and to celebrate a more solemne and longer Fast at that season; but with such different obseruations and facions, as vsually falleth out among sundry nations and companies; when all agree in one end or maine worke, but haue not the same Rules to proceed by, prescribed vnto them. But if this be supposed, yet still I say, that it is not certaine, that the Apostles did eyther institute or obserue a Lent Fast of forty daies, such as is now vsed in the Christiã Church.

3. *Propos.* There is no reason to imagine, that the Fast of *Lent* was any precept of Christs, either deliuered by his own mouth, or giuen to the Apostles by inspiration or otherwise. And for this my reasons are two.

1. My first reason shall be the same with that which Saint *Augustine* vsed in the very like case. Hee disputing of the *Saturdayes* Fast, against one who

who vrged the neceſſitie of it, concludeth or reaſoneth in this manner: [a] *I* (ſaith hee) *hauing in my minde reuolued the New Teſtament, doe finde that Faſting is commanded in the Writings of the Euangeliſts and Apoſtles, but on what dayes men ought not to faſt, and on what they ought, I no where finde it determined, by any commandement of Chriſt, or of his Apoſtles.* [*Atque per hoc ſentio, &c.*] *And for this cauſe I thinke* that there is no ſuch neceſſity in the Saturdaies faſt, otherwiſe than as the orders and cuſtome of euery Church doe require. In which diſpute of that learned Father, I conſider two things for my purpoſe. 1. I note his Aſſertion; *It is not found to bee appoynted or commanded in the Writings of the New Teſtament.* Secondly, I note his concluſion, which hee inferreth hereupon; [*Atque per hoc ſentio, &c.*] *And therefore I thinke* it no precept of Chriſt. And ſo I may reaſon in this caſe; Let a man reade all the Writings of the Apoſtles and Euangeliſts, and he ſhall no where finde, that the Faſt of Lent was appoynted by the commandement eyther of GOD, or of Chriſt, or of his Apoſtles. [*Atque per hoc ſentio,*] And therefore I am of opinion that it is no commandement of Chriſt.

2. My ſecond reaſon is, becauſe there is no proofe that may perſwade vs, that this inſtitution was Chriſts precept. For all the reaſon that is brought for this purpoſe, ſo farre as I can learne or obſerue, is onely this, becauſe ſome of the Ancients ſay, that it was appoynted by Chriſt, or by Almighty God. But they who ſpeake thus, doe

[a] *Ego in Euangelicis & Apoſtolicis literis, totóque inſtrumento, quod appellatur Teſtamentum nouum, animo id reuoluens, video præceptum eſſe ieiunium. Quibus autem diebus non oporteat ieiunare, & quibus oporteat, præcepto Domini vel Apoſtolorum non inuenio deſignatum. At per hoc ſentio, &c.* Auguſtin. Ep. 86. ad Caſulan. pag. 132. C.

doe not meane that which theſe men would haue who alledge them. For [a] *Bellarmine* confeſſeth of three of the chiefe of them, namely, Saint *Hierome*, Saint *Ambroſe*, and Saint *Auſtin*, that they are to be vnderſtood of Chriſts Fact and example, becauſe he faſted forty dayes; and not of any precept of his, as if hee had commanded it. And other [b] Writers of the Roman Church ſay the like of other Fathers, and conclude, that their ſayings doe not proue this to be any Diuine precept: but that when they ſay that *Lent*-Faſt was of Gods appoynting, wee muſt vnderſtand their words thus, that they meant to ſay, that it had ſome ground in Scriptures, in that *Moſes* and *Elias* and Chriſt did faſt forty dayes, or to like purpoſe. And if this be all, then the Fathers doe not ſay that Lent was of Chriſts inſtitution, or was appoynted by any command of his. And, other proofe than this, there is none that I know of, ſo much as tendered vnto vs.

[a] *Quamuis Ambroſius, Hieronymus, & Auguſtinus intelligant, Quadrageſimam à Domino indictã non verbo, ſed exemplo, &c.* Bellarm. de bonis oper. l. 2. c. 14. §. Adde quod non.

[b] Azor. Inſtit. l. 7. cap. 12. q. 1. pa. 566, 567. Leſſ. de Iuſtit. & Iure, l. 4. c. 2. Dubit. 5. nu. 31. pa. 723. Filliuc. Moral. quæſt. Tract. 27. part. 2. cap. 5. nu. 78. pag. 285.

The concluſion then of all is, that this Faſt of Lent is of very ancient obſeruation, but not of Diuine or Apoſtolicall inſtitution: for ought that yet hath beene proued.

II. The ſecond particular to be inquired into, is, How and in what ſort Lent was kept in the ancient Church. And for anſwere hereto, my meaning is not, neyther is it neceſſary, to enquire into all the ſeuerall cuſtomes and orders that were vſed among them, which were an endleſſe and needleſſe piece of worke: but onely to note the extraordinary zeale and deuotion, which they vſed

ſed at this time more than at other. And that may be ſeene in foure things eſpecially.

1. In the length and continuance of their Faſts. For whereas at other times in the yeere they faſted one or two or three dayes in one weeke, and ſeldome oftner or more; in the time of Lent, for the moſt part, they vſed to faſt eyther ſixe or fiue dayes together, and that for diuers weekes one after another, without intermiſſion. [a] And ſecondly, thoſe which at other times did breake off their Faſt at three of the Clocke after noone, in the time of Lent continued their abſtinence till euening or Sunne-ſet.

2. In the hardneſſe or meaneneſſe of their fare, when they did eate. For on thoſe dayes, [b] when they did not faſt, as on Sundayes and Saturdayes, they did take both their dinner and ſupper; and on their faſting-dayes, after abſtinence all day, they refreſhed themſelues at night: but ſtill their dyet was both ſparing and courſe; ſuch as *Daniel* vſed in his Faſt of three weekes. For as he ſaith of that time, * *I ate no pleaſant bread, neyther came fleſh nor wine in my mouth, &c.* So theſe ancient Chriſtians during the time of Lent, did forbeare fleſh and wine and ſtrong drinkes, and all nouriſhing and pleaſant food. Yea, ſometimes they contented themſelues with a dry feeding of bread and ſalt, and ſome few hearbes or dryed rootes.

3. In [c] the ſtrictneſſe of diſcipline, and ſeueritie of puniſhment which then they exerciſed for correcting of ſinne. [d] For if a man had fallen into ſome foule crimes, they vſed on the firſt day of Lent,

(a) Antiquit. Liturg. to. 2. in feriam 6. poſt Cineres. p. 104.
(b) v. Antiqu. Liturg. to. 2. in feriam 6. poſt Cineres. p. 106.
* Dan. 10. 3.
[c] *Solenne tempus aduenit, quod amplius quam per omni cætera ſpatia, nos orationibus atq; ieiunijs animam humiliare, & corpus caſtigare commonet.* Aug. de diuerſ. Serm. 74. cap. 1. pa 498. B. & cap. 6. *Exhorter ut quotidianis ieiunijs, largioribus eleemoſynis, feruentioribus orationibus Deum propitietis.*
(d) Antiq. Lit. to. 2. in feria 4. Cinerũ. p. 49. & ſeqq. Fileſiac. de Quadr. cap. 12. & 15. Booke of Cõmon Prayer, in the beginning of the Commination.

Lent, (which they called [*Caput ieiunij*] the *beginning of the Faſt*) to enioyne him publique penance, ſuch as the fault did ſeeme to require: and then, after his penance ended, their manner was, vpon the humiliation and ſubmiſſion of the penitent, on Maundy-Thurſday to receiue him into the peace and communion of the Church againe. And as for other Chriſtians, whoſe life was not ſpotted with any noted and open ſinne, yet they alſo exerciſed themſelues in the practice of ſtrict diſcipline, as in examining their conſciences, and amercing themſelues for their ſinnes, and refraining their vſuall delights and recreations; and all with more ſtrictneſſe and ſeuerity than at other times they were accuſtomed to vſe.

4. In the exactnes and plenty of all good duties, eyther of piety toward God, or of mercy towards the poore, or of charity towards all men. They were now more frequent in prayer, and more abundant in Almeſ-deedes, and more diligent in hearing and reading of Gods Word, and more plentifull in all good exerciſes that might profit their ſoules, or helpe forward their ſaluations: [a] ſo that at once, while they famiſhed the body, they fatted the ſoule; and while they eſtranged themſelues from earthly pleaſures, they ſolaced their ſoules with heauenly delights and ſpirituall ioy. And hereupon *Leo* ſaid, that [b] *hee ſhewed himſelfe to haue little religion at other times, that in theſe dayes was not found to be more religious than was ordinary.*

This

[a] *Omne vitæ noſtræ tempus ſtadium quoddam debemus putare virtutum, & ad cœleſte bratium totâ virtute contendere. Sed hoc præcipuè in Quadrageſimæ diebus impleudum eſt, qui abſtinentiæ et ieiunijs dedicati, tantum nobis ad virtutem animi conferunt, quantum & de corpore voluptatem decerpunt.* Aug. de Temp. Ser. 64. Dom. 1. Quad. pa. 231. D.

[b] *Parùm religioſus alio tempore demonſtratur, qui in his diebus religioſior non inuenitur.* Leo Ser. 2. de Quadr. p. 82. & Ser. 3. in princ.

This was their manner of ſpending their Lent-time. The proofe of which particulars, out of the ancient Writers, I haue forborne to ſet downe at large, becauſe I thought it would but trouble the ordinary Reader: and if any liſt to ſee the ſeuerall teſtimonies for confirmation heereof, I haue in the margin poynted him to ſuch Authors, as haue gathered them to his hand, and where the learned Reader may finde them, if he pleaſe. In the mean while, we may take notice of the holy vſe that the Ancients made of this time of humiliation: which practice of theirs, if it had bin continued among them, who boaſt themſelues of *Abraham* to bee their Father, and make claime to bee the children of the Catholike Church, they had not brought ſuch a ſcandall vpon this holy diſcipline, as in theſe latter dayes they haue.

III. The third thing to be enquired concerning Lent-Faſt is, What good vſes it had among thoſe Ancients, and might haue among vs, if wee did follow their example. And heereto mine anſwer is, that the generall vſe of this inſtitution was, that the people of God might haue a ſolemne and ſpeciall time of the yeere, wherein they might in a more ſpeciall and more exact and deuouter manner take account of their liues, and reckon with their ſoules for the yeere paſt, and amend whatſoeuer defects they had incurred, and performe all ſuch ſeruices as might both correct the errors of the yeere paſt, and fit them for all holy duties for the yeere to come. And this practice might bee of great vſe for all thoſe that ſhould

vse it accordingly; and that in diuers respects.

1. Because there may be some publike offences committed by the body of the Church, either in the omission of some common duty, or in their neglect of gouernment and discipline, or in the mis-ordering of the publike State. And for such sinnes as these, it is very reasonable, that as the whole body hath sinned, so the whole body should sorrow and repent, & by their ioynt humiliation & submission seeke reconciliation and pardon. For which purpose we may reade, that God did not onely appoint the Priest and the Prince & the people to bring sinne-offerings for their errours; but enioyned also an Oblation for the *Community* or body of the Church. *If* (saith he) *the whole Congregation of Israel sinne through ignorance, and the thing be hid from the eyes of the Assembly, &c. When the sinne which they haue sinned, is knowne, then the Congregation shall offer a young bullocke for the sinne.* In which passage wee may note two things. 1. That besides the sinnes of particular men, there might be some sinnes of the whole *Community*: sinnes which were properly neither the sins of the Priest, nor of the Prince, nor of the people alone, (for of all these hee had spoken before, and had appointed them their seuerall sacrifices and oblations for their atonement;) but sinnes they were of the whole Congregation. As for example, saith *Tostatus*, when some Ceremonie or dutie was neglected by all, and not noted or questioned by any. Or 2. when the body representatiue, they in who the chief gouernment rested, did

Leu. 4. 13, 14. &c.

did commit some errour against Gods Law, either in making, or in executing, or in neglecting of publike Lawes, or in any other miscarriage about the publike state. And such slips as these may easily be committed by the Congregation or Community of the Church at this day. Secondly note, that when such offence was committed, God appointed, that as the whole Congregation was guilty, so the whole should ioyne in the sinne-offering. And so it is requisite, that for the common sins, which escape the body of the Church, the whole body should ioyne together in one, and haue some appointed time, in which by their ioynt repentance they may obtaine common forgiuenesse. For which purpose the time of Lent might serue most conueniently: it being the time in which the whole Christian Church in all countryes, did vse publike humiliation; and in which Kings and Nobles and people did ioyne in exercises of fasting and sorrow. Which course of humiliation if Christian States and people did vse accordingly, then I doubt not, but many Churches and Common-wealths might haue stood firme and in a flourishing estate, which now are ruinated, or possessed by the Enemy; because they did not preuent Gods Iustice by their open and publike repentance.

Secondly, there might be good vse of this institution of Lent for the former purpose, because in the compasse of a yeere, there may happen many faults and distempers in our soules, which are not discernable in the space of a day or a weeke

or a moneth. Euery man findeth by experience in his houſes and dwellings, that if he view them at the daies or weekes end, hee ſhall many times perceiue but ſmall difference; but after a yeere or more he will ſpy ſome defects, which at the beginning of the yeere they had not. And ſo in his clothes, and the veſſell of his houſe, after ſo much ſpace of time, he may ſee decay in the one, and ruſt in the other, though he could not obſerue any ſuch change in the euening from that which they were in the morning, or at the end of the weeke from that which they were at the beginning. And ſo euen religious minds, though they fall not into ſome notorious ſinne, which ſheweth it ſelfe at the firſt view, yet they may decay in the feruour of their zeale, [a] or gather ſome ſoyle or filth of worldlines, or fleſhly delights, or ſuch like diſtemper, which is not to bee diſcerned till after ſome ſpace of time. And for amending of ſuch inſenſible decay of holines, this time would bee fit, if it were vſed with that obſeruance of diſcipline, which in ancient time was vſuall.

a *Quia dum carnis fragilitate auſterior obſeruantia relaxatur, dumq́ per varias actiones vitæ huius ſollicitudo diſtenditur; neceſſe eſt de mundano puluere etiam religioſa corda ſordeſcere: magnâ Diuinæ inſtitutionis ſalubritate prouiſum eſt, vt ad reparandam mentium puritatem quadraginta nobis dierum exercitatio mederetur, &c.* Leo Ser. 4. de Quadrag. p. 87.

3. There may be vſe alſo, becauſe in a matter of ſo great importance as is ſaluation and eternall happines, beſides the ordinary care, for which a Chriſtian hath opportunity & liberty euery day, ſome more ſpeciall time, to bee employed with more exact diligence, may be very conuenient at the leaſt, if not altogether neceſſary. For thus we ſee in trading and houſe-keeping, men thinke it not inough, to booke vp their expences and receipts euery day, nor to take accouut of their ſucceſſe-

ceſſe at the weekes end, but beſides that ordinary care, they vſe once in the yeere to caſt vp their ſhops, and compare their bookes, and take a generall view of all that hath paſt before in the yeere: that ſo they may correct their errors, and ſupply their defects, and better their whole courſe of liuing for the time to come. And the like care ſchoolemaſters take with their ſchollers: for beſides their daily and weekely exerciſes and examinations, once in the yeere they do lightly exact of their ſchollers an entire repetition of all their Grammer rules, that by diſuſe they doe not decay in the grounds of their learning. And thus in matters of the ſoule, God appointed the Iewes one Leu. 16.29,34.
ſpeciall day, or (as ſome thinke) two dayes in the yeere, wherein (ouer and aboue their ordinary exerciſes of Religion, vſed at other times) they ſhould wholly intend the fifting of their ſoules, and ſhould in a more exact manner exerciſe the workes of repentance and humiliation, and chaſtiſement for their ſinnes. And ſo the Chriſtian Church, beſide all their other inſtructions & exerciſes for that purpoſe, which happen euery day in one kinde or other, hath moreouer appointed a ſet and ſolemne time in the yeere, to celebrate the memory of Chriſts birth, and circumciſion, and of his death, and reſurrection, and aſcenſion into heauen, and ſuch like other myſteries of ſaluation. And ſo in like manner, it will be a very profitable courſe for Chriſtians, if they haue a ſet and ſolemne time of the yeere, for the more exact and perfect examination of their conſciences, and afflicting

flicting of their soules for sinne, and the quickening of their zeale for Gods seruice. And for this purpose the institution of Lent, as it was vsed by the ancient Church, is most proper and most profitable.

Now out of these two last poynts layed together, we may learne not to esteeme and thinke of the ancient institution and vse of Lent, according to the new obseruatiō of it in the Church of *Rome*. For if we looke vpon it according to the intention & practice of the old Christian Church, we cānot choose but thinke it to be a chiefe time of deuotion, and such a practice of holy discipline, as may season mens minds for all the yeere after. But if we looke vpon it according to the doctrine and practice of the Roman Church, we may then iustly thinke it a superstitious foppery; as many of the Worthies and learned Writers of the reformed Churches haue spoken and written of it. Which speeches of theirs, because they may seeme sometimes to involue the ancient Fathers & the nouell Doctors of the Roman Church in the same condemnation; and haue therefore giuen occasion to the *Romanists* to declame against our Churches, as if they condemned all the Ancient Fathers of superstition in their allowance of this Lent-fast: it will not be impertinent, if in this place, I adde a few words more for the defence of our Churches Doctrine. Whereas therefore our Aduersaries say, and that with great and loud outcries, that we and our Churches doe not onely condemne all fasting, and in particular this Fast of Lent; but

that we doe withall accuse all the old and purer Churches of Christ, as being superstitious in their vse of these Fasts; mine answere is as followeth.

First, For forreine Churches beyond the Seas, which haue abolished the vse of Lent-Fast, I say, they may haue as iust or reasonable a defence for their doing, as the Church of Rome hath for her doings about some other Fasts. For it is acknowledged by her owne children, that [a] *the fast of Wednesday and Friday* euery weeke, *was commanded from the very times of the Apostles*, and yet is *now abrogated* in the Church of Rome, by a contrary custome, and *is left at mens free choice and liberty*. And if it be lawfull for them to abrogate that old Law of Fasting on Wednesday and Friday, vsed from the Apostles time, onely because custome growing out of negligence and decay of zeale, hath brought a disuse of it: then it cannot be iudged sinfull and inexcusable in these Churches, which out of consideration to auoid Popish superstition, did abrogate those Lawes of Lent-Fast, which Antiquity had formerly obserued.

Secondly, for our owne Church at home, shee in her publique Liturgy [b] hath allowed the old discipline of Lent, and doth wish the restoring of it. And diuers learned Writers [c] in our Church, of good note and great learning, haue defended the holy vse of it in their writings. And if any priuate men among vs haue condemned all vse of Lent-Fast, it is their priuate opinion, not approued by our Church. And therefore as themselues will

[a] *Ieiunia quarta & sexta feria inde ab Apostolorum temporibus in praecepto posita, constat consuetudine abrogatum esse, & arbitrio nostro relictum.* Reginald. Prax. fori Poenit. l. 4. cap. 12. Sect. 3. p. 148. num. 133.

(b) Booke of Common-Prayer in the beginning of the Commination.

(c) *Field* of the Church l. 3. cap. 19. *Hooker* Polit. l. 5. nu. 72. *Morton* Appeale, l. 2. cap. 24. *Boys* on the Epistle for the first Sunday in Lent. Sir *Edw. Sands* Relation nu. 10. fol. 6. pag. 2.

will not answer for euery incommodious speech, that hath fallen from the lippes or pennes of any of their Writers; no more ought they to charge our Church with euery such saying that any priuate Doctor of her profession hath vttered.

Thirdly, If any Diuines in the reformed Churches haue vttered any thing to the preiudice eyther of fasting in generall, or of this Fast of Lent in particular; they looked vpon it, as they then saw it practised: and finding it full of superstition in the Church of Rome, they could not conceiue much better vse of it, than they found among them, who magnified it so much. And therefore wee may thanke the Church of Rome for the contempt or dislike that Lent hath of late growne into.

Fourthly, The speeches which these learned men haue let fall against these Fasts, were vttered amidst their contentions and controuersies with the Roman Church, and while they were iustly offended with her superstitions. And in such a case, it is not strange, if men bending themselues against the present errours, doe sometimes at vnawares runne too farre the contrary way. To this purpose wee reade in the Ecclesiasticall History, that [a] *Dionysius Alexandrinus*, an Orthodox Father, *striuing too eagerly against Sabellius*, did vnwittingly *sow the seedes of Arianisme*, and gaue the first occasion to that heresie. And in this sort they of the Church of Rome doe sometimes excuse the ancient Fathers for their harsh speeches.

[a] *Staple-*

a *Fere enim impietatis istius, quæ tantoperè nunc celebratur, eam dico, quæ κατὰ τὸ ἀνόμοιον siue de inæqualitate est, quantum ego scio, ipse primus seminarium præbuit: non ille quidem improbitate mentis & sententia, sed quòd vehementiùs acriúsque oppugnare Sabellium voluerit. Quem ego comparare solitus sum insitori, qui quum incurium tenellæ arboris statum sedulò corrigere studeat, deinde immodicè extrahendo peccet, & modò excidat, plantámque ipsam in contrariam diuersámque deducat formam, &c.* Nicephor. l. 6. c. 25. ex Epist. Basil. M. ad Maxim. Philos. quæ extat. tom. 2. edit. Paris. Græcolat. pag. 802. & est Epist. 41. inter opera S. Basil.

[a] *Stapleton* saith, that wee must *put a difference betweene those sayings of the Fathers, which they did deliuer positiuely and assertiuely in a composed Treatise, and those things which they wrote in their disputations against some aduersary. For in such case,* (saith hee) *it is easie to exceede measure, and to goe beyond the bounds of truth.* And [b] *Sixtus Senensis* noteth, that *the ancient Fathers were so zealous in defending the Catholique faith, that while they laboured with all their might to ouerthrow one errour, they many times fell into the contrary, or might seeme to fall into it; euen as Husbandmen in* streighteining a crooked sprigge, doe many times bend it too farre the contrary way. And thus (saith hee) St. *Austin* writing against the Pelagians, did goe so farre in defence of Gods grace, that hee seemeth to doe some wrong to mans free-will. And on the contrary side, Saint *Chrysostome* defending free-will against the Manichees, did extoll it too farre with some wrong to Gods grace. And so it is no vnpardonable errour, if some learned men among vs, or in our Churches, haue in hatred to the superstitions of Rome, spoken too harshly of the deuotions of elder times. And this shall suffice for answere to this accusation or calumnie rather of the Romish Doctors.

a *Maximè distinguenda sunt ea, quæ dogmaticè & assertiuè in Tractatu positiuo docent, ab ijs quæ contentiosè & in certamine contra Aduersarium disputando, etiam in materia fidei pronunciant. Ab hoc enim posteriori genere dictorum nulla testimonia sumenda sunt, quia facilè contingit in talibus modum excedere, & veritatis lineam transgredi: vt de Origine notat Athanasius, & de Gregorio notauit Rufinus.* Stapl. Contr. Relect. 6. q. 4. in Explicat. pag. 633.

b *Ardebant veteres illi tanto sincere pietatis & Catholicæ defensionis ardore, vt dum vnum errorem omni virium conatu destruere contendunt, sæpe in alterum oppositum errorem vel decidérint, vel quodammodo decidisse videantur, agricolarum more, &c.* Sixt. Sen. Bibl. l. 5. in præfat. pag. 328, 329.

IIII. The fourth question concerning this time of Lent, is, Why this time of the yeere was made choyce of for this purpose.

Answ. I finde many reasons giuen by diuers

men. But of those many, the greater part may seeme to haue beene inuented after the institution of Lent, to shew the congruity and fitnesse of it. The true reasons, which I thinke did moue the Church at the beginning to ordaine this time of humiliation, were onely but two of them.

Of the former sort were these and such like.

1. The first is a politique reason: and it is, because this time of the yeere is a time of *breed*, and of the increase of creatures; and the sparing of the increase by abstinence and slender diet, might cause plenty and store in the Common-wealth for all the yeere after.

2. The second is a physicall reason, which is, because [a] at this time of the yeere there is most increase of bloud in a mans body, and the heate thereof might breed Feuers and hot diseases; but spare diet, especially consisting of fish, and hearbes and rootes, &c. will serue to qualifie the bloud, and to bring it to a right temper.

3. The third is a reason of allusion to the season of the yeere. For [b] now fields and gardens, trees and hearbes, and all vegetables doe sprowt and flourish and grow: and so with the season of the yeere, Christians should haue their spring of grace, and be now more plentifull in all good duties and offices of Religion. Againe, now is the seed-time of the world: Men plow and harrow and breake the clods of the ground, that it may be fit to receiue seed, and to bring forth a plentifull increase: and so men being admonished by the course of nature, should now take occasion to ransack

(a) Filliuc. Tractat. 27. cap. 5. part. 2. q. 8. num. 97. pag. 287.

b *Hãc Quadragesimam largitus est nobis Dõminus, ut huius temporis spatio in meremetipsius creaturæ nunc concipiamus virtutũ germina.—Terra, indictâ Quadragesimâ, asperitatẽ deponit hiemis; ego indictâ Quadragesimâ, asperitatem vitio delictorum. Illa terra, aratris scinditur, ut immundus sit cõgrua frugibus; mea terra ieiuniis exaratur, ut cœlestibus sit apta seminibus. Herba segetum veniuiscit in messem, surculus arboris conatur in frutices, palmes vineæ pubescit in gemmam, &c.* Ambros. Serm. 40. in feria 2. post Dominic. 2. Quadrag. pag. 57. C. F.

ransack their consciences, and humble their soules, and chasten the whole man, that they may be the more fit to receiue the seedes of grace, and to bring forth the fruits of righteousnesse.

4. The fourth is a reason drawne from the necessity of mortification at this time. For now bloud doth most increase, and is most hot and stirring, (a) and the heat of nature is apt to produce increase of lust. And therefore as men in the spring-time doe abstaine from Wine and strong drinkes, least they should breed Feuers and hot distempers in the body: so it is requisite that they should forbeare nourishing meates, and vse abstinence, least full feeding should breed youthfull lusts and distempers in the soule.

(a) Iansen. in Concord. cap. 15. pag. 1224. col. 2. E. Filliuc. Tractat. 27. cap. 5. part. 2. q. 8. num. 97. Aliique.

These and such like are the reasons of congruitie, which (vnder correction) I thinke men did afterward inuent, to shew the reasonablenesse and fitnesse of this constitution: but now the proper reasons, which did (as I take it) induce the Church to appoynt this Fast, were these two.

1. Because the time going before Easter, was the time of Christs sufferings and passion and death. In those dayes it was, that he was betrayed by his Disciple, and sweat bloud in the Garden, and was accused and condemned and crucified and buried for our sinnes: which sufferings of Christ are still to be remembred with thankefulnesse by euery Christian. And because the most expresse remembrance of things past, is at the same time when they were done: therefore this time of the yeere, in which Christ did vndergoe his

his sufferings, was thought the fittest season in which Christians should celebrate the memory of them. For to this purpose it is, that God himselfe, speaking of the day in which hee destroyed the Egyptians, and passed by the Israelites houses without hurt, saith of it, (a) *This day shall bee vnto you for a memoriall, and yee shall keepe it a Feast vnto the Lord throughout your generations.* And a little after, (b) *Yee shall obserue the Feast of vnleauened bread: for in this selfe-same day haue I brought your armies out of the Land of Egypt. Therefore shall yee obserue this day in your generations by an Ordinance for euer.* And againe, (c) *Remember this day in which yee came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage, &c. And when the Lord shall bring thee into the Land of the Cananites, &c. thou shalt keepe this seruice in this moneth, &c. And it shall bee for a signe vnto thee vpon thine hand, and for a memoriall betweene thine eyes, that the Lords Law may bee in thy mouth. Thou shalt therefore keepe this Ordinance in his season from yeere to yeere.* Where we may note what God requireth, and why hee requireth it. First, What: and that is, that they should keepe this day of that moneth from yeere to yeere, for a Festiuall day vnto the Lord. Secondly, Why they should doe this at this time: and that is, because at this time God did deliuer them, and the keeping of this time would be for a signe of remembrance, and for a memoriall of that mercy. And for like purpose, (d) *Ester* and *Mordecai* commanded the same dayes to bee celebrated euery yeere, in which God had deliuered them from

(a) Exod. 12.14.

(b) Vers. 17.

(c) Exod. 13.3, 5, 9, 10.

(d) Ester 9. 21, 22.

from their danger. And so the Church of Christ hath euer thought it fit, that the Acts and workes of our Sauiour, which tend to our Redemption; such as were his Conception, Birth, Resurrection, Ascension into heauen, &c. should be celebrated among Christians about the same time of the yeere, in which he performed them. And so no lesse fit is it, that his sufferings and death & passion, should bee celebrated with all thankfulnes about the same season, in which he endured them. And the manner in which such sufferings of his may be most liuely represented and remembred by vs, is, if we passe those dayes in humiliation and sorrow, whereby we may bee made conformable to his passion and death: and by which wee may in a good sence be said to fulfill that which Christ did foretell, when he said, *The children of the Bridegroome shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those dayes.* And sure, God himselfe, by so obscuring the sunne, that contrary to the course of nature it was darkened all the time that Christ was on the Crosse, doth teach vs, with what behauiour we should passe the time of his Sonnes sufferings and death. And from hence I may conclude, in St. *Augustines* words, *In what part of the yeere could Lent haue bin more fitly placed, then in that which is ieyned to our Lords passion and death.*

Secondly, because the Feast of *Easter* was now at hand, and that was the day in which our Lord rose againe from his graue, in which new Conuerts were baptized in great number, and in which all

a *Ieiunandum & orandum est. Et quando potiùs, quando iustantiùs, quàm propinquante Dominicæ passionis solennitate, quæ celebritate anniuersaria quodammodo nobis eiusdē noctis memoriā restituitur, ac diuinitùs delegatur.* Aug. de Diuer. Serm. 74. c. 5. pag. 499. B.

(b) Luk. 5. 35.

c *In qua parte anni congruentiùs obseruatio Quadragesimæ constitueretur, nisi continuis finis atq; continuus Dominicæ passionis?* Aug. epist. 119. ad Ianuar. cap. 15. pag. 198. f.

all sorts of men did come in flockes to the receiuing of the Lords Supper. And therefore as the (a) Ioh. 19. 31. Euangelist saith of the Iewes Easter, a that *that was an high day*: so it may much more be said of the Christians Easter, that it is an *high day*, and to bee kept with all celebrity, and in the most deuoutest manner. And in respect heereof, the Ancients were wont to keepe this Feast, not for one day onely, or for three dayes space, as wee now doe, but for a whole weeke together. Yea, and some festiuity and remembrance of it, they kept for sixe weekes more, euen till Whitsontide, or the day of Pentecost. Now that the great celebrity of this *high day* might be performed with better deuotion, and more religious reioycing, the ancient Fathers thought it necessarie, that men should bee prepared aforehand for the performance of so weighty a seruice. And therefore as the Iews b had (b) 2 Chron. 35. 6. & Ioh. 11. 55. their dayes of preparation before the Passeouer; and as Christians haue their fasting eues to goe before their festiuall dayes, that by their former dayes repentance they may be prepared for an holy reioycing the next day after: so the Christian Church did thinke it necessary, before this great Feast of Christs Resurrection, to appoint some large and solemne time for humiliation and conuersion, that men being prepared by a serious practice of al good duties, they might be the more fit to pray for the new Conuerts, and to receiue the blessed Sacrament, and to praise God for his Sons Resurrection, and to passe this holy day with an holy and heauenly reioycing. And these, I take it,

ir, were the true reasons.

V. The fift and last question concerning Lent, is, What relation this Fast of *fortie dayes* in the Church, hath to that of our Sauiour, when he fasted *forty dayes* in the Wildernesse.

Answ. To this question there bee three answeres.

1. That our Lord, as himselfe fasted *fortie dayes* in the manner declared, so he appointed and ordained, that his Disciples & the whole Church after him should follow his example, and fast once in the yeere so many dayes as he had done before in the wildernesse. This seemeth to bee the opinion of [a] *Caster*, and [b] *Filesacus*, and the [c] Author of the Booke called *Antiquitates Liturgicæ*.

Answ. 2. The second answere is, that though Christ did not in words giue any such Law, or appoint any such order, yet his bare example doth tye Christians to the like obseruation & practice. Of this opinion some later Diuines in the Roman Church may seeme to bee, who (as [d] *Azorius* saith of them) did thinke that *Lent-Fast was by Diuine Law, because some of the Fathers seeme to say that it was of Gods appoynting; for that Christ did fast forty dayes and forty nights.* But these two answeres haue small shew of probability, and no ground of certainety at all. For all the reason that they alledge, is (so farre as I know) only the authorities of some Fathers; which haue not that meaning, as Doctors of their owne Church haue endeuoured to declare.

Answ. 3.

(a) Enchirid. lo. de Ieiun. pag. 563. In solutione textæ obiectionis.

(b) de Quadr. cap. 1. pag. 392. & seqq.

(c) To. 2. Sabbatho post Cineres, pag. 1178. 118.

(d) *Quidam inuenti sunt esse iure Diuino sanctum, & id probant, quia aliqui veteres Ecclesiæ Patres videntur docuisse, illud esse iuris Diuini, quia Christus quadraginta dierum & quadraginta noctium ieiunium seruauit.* Azor. Instit. part. 1. l. 7. cap. 12. q. 1. pa. 566. col. 1.

Answ. 3. The third answere is, that neither Christs precept nor practice doth force or require Christians to keepe a Fast of fortie dayes, or this which we call our Lent-Fast: but yet the Church did appoint and doth observe this number of daies in their Lent-Fast, with respect and reference to the like number of dayes that Christ fasted in the wilderneſſe. To this purpoſe *Teſtatus* ſeemeth to ſpeake, when he ſaith, that [a] our *fortie dayes Fast doth not proceede from any precept of Christ, but onely from the constitution of the Church*: yet it had (ſaith he) *reasons drawne from this Fast of Christ*. And *Stapleton*, [b] *The Church* (ſaith he) *doth fast fortie dayes after the example of Christ, not simply because Christ did so, but because the Church hath taught vs by his example to doe so*. Which words may againe ſeeme to carrie the like meaning.

But it mattereth not what they mean. [c] A reuerend and learned Writer in our own Church, hath deliuered the poynt in much more diſtinct manner. Hee ſaith three things. 1. That *it is very fit, there be a ſolemne time, at leaſt once in the yeere, wherein men may call themſelues to an account for all their negligences, repent them of all their euill doings, and with Prayers, faſtings and mournings turne vnto the Lord*. 2. That *this time of the yeere was choſen as fitteſt, both becauſe thus herein we remember the ſuffrings of Christ for our ſinnes, as alſo for that after this meditation of Christs ſufferings, his ioyfull Reſurrection doth immediately preſent it ſelfe vnto vs in the dayes following, &c.* 3. That *for the limitation of the number of dayes, men had an eye to Christs Fast of*

forty.

[a] Dicendū, quod hoc non proueniat ex aliquo mandato Christi, ſed ex ſola Eccleſiæ ſtatuto. Habuit tamen illud cauſas pendentes ex hoc facto. Toſtat. in Mat. 4. q. 18.

[b] Ieiunat igitur Eccleſia 40. diebus ad exemplum Christi, non quidē ſimpliciter, quia Christus ſic fecit, ſed quia eius exemplo ſic faciendum eſſe, & in hac parte eius veſtigia ſequenda eſſe, Eccleſia ab Apoſtolorū tempore docuit. Stap. Prompt. Catholi. Dominic. 2. Quadr. text. 1. pag. 78.

(c) D. Field of the Church, 3. cap. 19. pag. 105. &c.

forty dates, as to a conuenient direction. His meaning is, that the Church vpon the former grounds being to appoint a number of dayes for this solemne seruice and worke of humiliation, did make choice of *forty dayes*, the rather because Christ had fasted *forty dayes* for our sakes. Neither is this without good ground and reason. For first, the very number of the same dayes might serue for a more liuely expression and remembrance of Christs Fast for our sakes. To which purpose God himselfe saith in a like case, vnto the rebellious Iewes: (a) *After the number of the dayes, in which ye searched the Land, euen forty dayes (each day for a yeere) shall ye beare your iniquities, euen forty yeeres.* In which passage we may note three things. 1. That GOD did proportion the punishment to the sinne, that it might carry the more liuely representation of it. This I gather hence, because he saith, *After the number, &c.* for that implyeth, that God did regulate the punishment by the offence. 2. That this proportion betweene the sinne and the punishment, consisted in the paritie or equality of the same number obserued in them both. 3. That though there was this proportion and likenes of the number, yet there was a disproportion and vnlikenes in the matter of that number. For their sinne was acted in *fortie dayes*, but their punishment was to be suffered for *fortie yeeres*: and yet notwithstanding this dissimilitude in the things numbred, the likenes in the very number it selfe, did serue to keepe a fresh remembrance of the fact. And so in our Lent-Fast, there is a great difference

(a) Num. 14. 34.

betweene the manner of Christs Fast, and of ours; becauſe hee faſted altogether without taſting any thing, which we can no way reach vnto; but doe come as farre ſhort of it, as *forty dayes* are ſhort of *forty yeeres*: yet in as much as we keepe the ſame number of dayes in our Faſt, that he kept in his; this very agreement in the number, may ſerue to repreſent vnto vs, and to keepe a remembrance of that Faſt of our Sauiour.

And this may be one reaſon, why the Church might well make choyce of the ſame number of dayes for their yeerely and ſolemne Faſt, which our Lord had vſed before in his Faſt in the Wilderneſſe.

Secondly, the Church might iuſtly make choice of the ſame number of dayes that Chriſt faſted, becauſe the vſing of the ſame number might ſerue as a meanes to expreſſe our affection and loue to our Sauiour. For euen among men, children that deſire to honour the memory of their Fathers, will ſometimes ſay, I will doe this thing, or I will obſerue that order, *becauſe my Father or Grandfather* was wont to doe ſo before me. And a kinde man after the death of his friend or benefactor, whom he doth reuerence and reſpect, will keepe ſome cuſtomes, and vſe ſome courſes, the rather becauſe it was the manner of that man, whom he doth honour, to doth ſo. And finally, all of vs vſe to ſay of them that be in loue, or doe tenderly affect one another; that they loue the very ground on which each of them doth tread. And all this ſheweth, that where there is loue and reſpect, there men doe

desire to conforme themselues in euery manner they may, to the actions and behauiour of those, whom they doe affect and loue. And so in this case, the Church might shew loue and respect to her Redeemer, by making choice of that number of dayes for her Fast, which hee had vsed in his. I may then, I hope, not without ground, say, that the Church did appoint *fortie dayes* for Lent-Fast, with an eye to the *forty dayes* Fast of our Sauiour; as willing, and that for good reason, to keepe the same number of dayes, that he had done.

Now out of all this, we haue three Corollaries, which I will add for the conclusion of this whole point.

1. *Coroll.* That our Church hath great reason to wish, as she doth; that the old Discipline of Lent might be restored againe. For the thing in it selfe is very effectuall to purge sinne, and worke amendment of life: and the time is very fitly chosen, to conforme vs to the sufferings of Christ, and to fit vs for the celebrity of his Resurrection: because hauing purged out the *old leuen* of sin, we may then *keepe the feast with the vnleauened bread of sincerity and truth*: yea and the very number of dayes, allotted for this seruice, is not without some good vse to keepe the fresher remembrance of our Lords tentations and fastings.

2. *Coroll.* That they ouershoote themselues in a mis-gouerned zeale, who to crosse the superstitions of *Rome*, do make these ancient fasting daies the vsual times of their feasting. For in so doing, they doe not onely shew themselues vnlike to the

ancient Christians, whose example it is our glory to follow in their lawfull courses; but they doe also without cause obliterate a good memoriall of their Sauiours mercies. I like their zeale in purging out of Popish superstition: but I should like it better, if it were ioyned with moderation and wisedome; such for example sake, as *Ezekiah* and the Priests did vse in purging of the Temple. And that was this, (a) *They brought out all the vncleannes, that they found in the Temple of the Lord, into the Court of the House of the Lord: and the Leuites tooke it, to carry it out abroad into the brooke Kidron.* And when they had thus cleansed all the House of the Lord, then (b) *they brought bullocks*, and *rammes* and *Lambes* and *hee goates*, and offered sacrifices, and performed the wonted seruice to the Lord in his Temple. Where we see, they did not pull downe the Temple because of the superstitions or abominations rather, with which *Ahaz* and the Idolaters of that time had defiled it: but they purged out the superstition, and kept the Temple still for its wonted holy vses. And so it were a commendable zeale, if men would purge the ancient fasting dayes of the Church, and carrie out the superstitions with which Popery hath defiled them, and cast them into some riuer, or rather into some sea, that they may neuer apeare any more in the Christian world. But as it had beene too much violence then, to pull downe the Temple for the vncleannes sake that was in it; so it is too much violence now, to abolish all times of fasting and humiliation for the superstition that some men haue placed in them.

(a) 2 Chro. 29. 16.

(b) Vers. 21. &c.

3. *Coroll.* That while there is no publique order for restoring the old Discipline, men should doe well each one for himselfe apart, to renew so much of it, as he may conueniently in his priuate practice. And if any mans eyther great infirmities or iust occasions doe let him from so doing; (For infirmities of body, and occasions of necessary duties haue euer beene dispensed with;) yet then hee should in desire follow after that, which indeed he cannot aspire vnto; and by his inward humiliation & repentance, labour to recompence what is wanting in his outward fasting and abstinence. And thus I haue done with this poynt of Lent; and consequently haue by Gods mercy now finished that which in the second place I proposed concerning our Sauiours fasting, and other things of our practice, occasioned thereby.

Chap. XI.

Of Christs hungring.

HAuing hitherto spoken of our Saiours *fasting*; it remaineth to adde a word or two of the consequent thereof, which is his *hungring*, and thereof the Euangelist saith, *Hee was afterward an hungred*; which words may haue two senses.

The first is this, *Hee was afterward an hungred*; that is, he now first began to feel the want of meat, and nature began to craue some supply. And this interpretation implyeth, that for the whole space of forty dayes, hee had no hunger, nor felt no want of meate, or no affliction of body for lacke of it: but that during that whole space, the Deitie did support the humane nature, that his naturall heat did not worke vpon the nourishment, according to natures course, as the [a] fire of the Furnace did not worke vpon the three men that were cast into the middest of it.

(a) Dan. 3. 25.

Secondly, the words may be expounded thus, *Hee was afterward an hungred*; that is, he was now pinched with hunger, and being not well able to endure any longer, did manifest his hunger by seeking after meate. And this interpretation implyeth, that in the time of his forty dayes Fast, he felt

felt some hunger, though not such as afterward he did, nor such but that he might endure it, and expect a longer time, before need made him to breake off his purpose of fasting. And this I take to be the fitter and more probable exposition of the words.

But which way soeuer wee take it, yet thus much is apparent by the Text, that at the end of forty dayes, Christ through long abstinence was in some distresse for want of something to refresh nature, and yet had not so much as a piece of bread to satisfie his hunger, or to allay the craving appetite of his stomach. For that our Lords hunger in this place, was not ordinary, such as a man when he hath fasted beyond his time may haue, and yet continue without any notable offence vnto nature: but rather that it was a pinching and a biting hunger, and such as bred griefuance and molestation to nature, in a greater measure than is vsuall, may appeare by two things. First, because the Deuill tooke occasion by this hunger, to tempt him with turning stones into bread: which had beene too silly a deuice for the old Serpent to vse against our Sauiour, if hee had not seene him to bee in some extremity for want of food. Secondly, because when the Deuill had done his tentation (for which Christ did make way by his hunger,) GOD sent *Angels* from heauen to a *minister vnto him*, that is, to bring him meat for his refreshing. Which kind of prouidence God doth not vse to shew, but in cases of extremity, and when ordinary meanes doe fayle vs.

(a) Matt. 4. 11.

vs. The ſumme of all is, that Chriſt by his long abſtinence did endure extreme hunger, by which his body was afflicted, and nature was moleſted.

And hence wee haue this note, that our Lord did for our ſakes ſubmit himſelfe to the afflictions and miſeries of this life. The Prophet calleth him (b) Iſ. 53. 3. b *a man of ſorrowes, and acquainted with griefe*. And the Euangeliſts doe ſhew, how his whole life was a Tragedie of many ſufferings. Hee was perſecuted from his cradle to his Croſſe, and afflicted from the wombe to the graue: but that which in this place wee are to take eſpeciall notice of, is, the pinching hunger which hee willingly endured, becauſe it tended to the working of our Redemption, and the furthering of our ſaluation. To which purpoſe Saint *Iohn* doth further note, that our Lord (c) Ioh. 4. 6. c *being wearied with his iourney, ſate thus on Iacobs Well*: And giueth vs withall to vnderſtand, that hee was both hungry and thirſty, when hee telleth vs, that (d) Verſ. 8. d *his Diſciples were gone away vnto the Citie, to buy meate*; and that himſelfe did (e) Verſ. 7, 9. e *aske water of the woman to drinke*. And yet notwithſtanding his preſent want of food at this time, hee refuſed to eate when it was brought him, becauſe he had a more neceſſary worke in hand, which he preferred before it; that is, (f) Verſ. 34. f *to doe the will of him that ſent him, and to finiſh his worke*; implying in that ſpeech, the preaching of the Goſpel, and his labouring to ſaue the ſoules of men. And in this place, the extreme hunger that hee ſuffered, was for the preparing of himſelfe for his office, and

for

for the finishing of the worke of our Redemption. Thus our Lord was contented to endure hunger and thirst, and any thing, for the redeeming and sauing of our soules; so that as he sometimes said of the Iewes, after hee had vsed all good meanes to worke grace in them, *What could haue beene done more to my Vineyard, that I haue not done in it?* so, considering his meane birth, and poore life, and bitter death, &c. he may as truely say, *What could I haue suffered more for my Church, which I haue not suffered for her?* And now if any man perish, it is his owne fault, who refuseth so great saluation wrought by his Sauiour: and if any man be saued, it is Christs merits, who hath purchased so great Redemption for him, when he had deserued damnation and death. (a) Isai. 5. 4.

And this may afford vs diuers good lessons, at which I will onely poynt in this place.

1. It teacheth vs, what a thankefull remembrance wee should keepe of our Sauiours paynes for vs at all times. But especially at this time of Lent, ordayned of purpose for a memoriall of Christs sufferings, wee should often meditate on our Sauiours great loue vnto vs, and consider from poynt to poynt, how being Lord of all, hee made himselfe the baseſt of all, borne in a stable, lodged in a Manger, pinched with hunger, followed with contempt; accused, condemned, crucified and entombed in the earth for our sakes.

2. It yeeldeth vs comfort in all distresses. For the poore soule, when he is pinched with famine, may thus thinke with himselfe; *My case is poore*

and miserable; but so was my Lord and Sauiours before mee: hee suffered greater hunger than this, and yet he had no bread to refresh him; nor no eye of man to pitty him: but the onely company and comfort that he had for the time, was the yelling of wilde beasts about him, and the tentations and batteries of the Deuill against him. And the like meditation of cõfort may be drawne from other parts of Christs sufferings, to cheare all them that be in like distresse. For if Christ suffered such great things without grudging, a Christian may be content to indure lesser things with patience and comfort.

3. It cryeth shame vpon our niceneſſe and tenderneſſe, who repine to endure any paynes, eyther for Christs sake, or our owne. For if hee fasted so long, and hungred so much for vs; is it not much more reason, that when occasion serueth, wee should fast for our selues? And yet see the difference. He fasted *forty dayes and forty nights*; and wee thinke it too much to fast one day, without adding any night vnto it: hee fasted, till hee fainted; and we thinke it too much to fast till we haue concocted the crudities of the former meale: hee fasted, when hunger pinched his body, and molested nature, and yet would endure it still, till hee had finished the worke, which hee intended in his Fast; & we think it too much, to endure the least paine, though the mortifying of our sinnes doe require a great deale more. Nay Christ was betrayed & appre hended & condemned and crucified for our sinnes; and wee thinke it too much

much to passe these dayes of his sufferings, in a sad and mournefull remembrance of them. But wee should learne to checke our dulnesse, by comparing it with our Saviours forwardnesse and zeale. And hereunto wee may further adde, that if the Physician doe taste of the potion which hee prescribeth, the Patient may be sure that there is no poyson in it: and so, seeing our Lord, the Physician of our soules, hath drunke so deepe of this Cup of humiliation, wee may be sure it is no way hurtfull to our soules. And therefore if we cannot equall him in fasting *forty dayes*, at least let vs not repine to follow him in fasting accommodate times: and as hee passed not for a pinching hunger, that he might worke our Redemption, so let not vs sticke at a little hunger, that wee may attaine the salvation that hee hath purchased for vs.

V 2 The

The Concluſion, touching the phyſicall vſe of Faſting.

Hitherto I haue exhorted men to Faſting out of the grounds of Diuinity; and I hope my labours will not altogether want effect in religious mindes: but yet it may be, that ſome who are well affected toward this exerciſe for the ſpirituall good that they heare to be in it, may bee deterred from the practice of it by reaſon of ſome corporall hurt which they feare to receiue from it. For my ſelfe haue met with ſome, who ſay that faſting breedeth winde in the ſtomach, griping in the bowels, giddineſſe in the head, and faintneſſe through the whole body: and by reaſon hereof, they thinke themſelues priuiledged and exempted from this taske of abſtinence. And true indeed it is, that ſome ſuch infirmities there may be, as cannot beare this want of food, without manifeſt hurt or inconuenience; in which caſes God diſpenſeth with them, whom himſelfe hath not made able to endure it. But it is no leſſe true, that moſt times men except againſt faſting, as an hinderance to their health, when it would be the onely helpe eyther to recouer or preſerue it. Surely, for mine owne part, I can truely ſay, that though

though before tryall I feared hurt, by reason of my sickly and weake temper: yet after tryall I haue found the quite contrary; my body more at ease, my spirits more free, and all my sences more fresh and liuely. And [a] *Cornarus*, an Italian Gentleman, reporteth of himselfe, that hee recouered himselfe out of a desperate sickenesse, and preserued himselfe in perfect health long after, onely by the helpe of a thin and spare dyet. And [b] *Lessius* hath gathered many examples of former time, by which it may appeare that fasting hath lengthened mens liues beyond the vsuall time. To all which experiments hee ioyneth both reasons of his owne, and testimonies of sundry learned Physicians; and it were easie, if that were requisit, to adde moe. But because this is a thing beside my profession, I am not willing to wade too farre in it: Onely, for conclusion, and to giue some satisfaction to such as conceit hurt without cause, I haue thought good to acquaint the Reader with the iudgement of *Eemelius*, a most learned and renowned Physician, who hath exactly set downe his minde concerning the physicall vse of fasting, in the words following:

(a) Tractat. de vitæ sobriæ commodis.

(b) In his book intituled, *Hygiasticon*, or Vera ratio conseruandæ valetudinis. num. 35. & seqq.

[a] *Eorum quæ per summa corpus exhaurium vacuantque, alia sudores cõspicuè cient, alia halitum tenuémque substantiam perspiratu digerunt. Hac genere continentur inedia, vnctio et frictio: illo exercitatio, balneum, laconicum. Phlebotomiæ vires proximè imitatur Inedia; sensim ac pedetentim.*

(a) Method. medendi l. 2. cap. 10.

tentim sanguinem absumens, quem semel ac repente phlebotomia vacuat: præterea verò crudos humores aliósq; complures dissipat, omnisque generis excremẽta propellit. Etenim natura libera nec impedita, salutaria quaque nobis continenter procurat. Quũ igitur consuetus corpori cibus aut subducitur, aut ex toto circumciditur, huiúsque penuria inest; insitus nobis calor omnium naturalium functionum author, per omnia diffusus ac insertus, noui cibi copiâ minimè implicatus, vbique vim suam exerens, inualescit. Ac primùm quidem vtilem succum & sanguinem in corporis partiúmque substantiã mutat absumitque nutritione: tenues verò humores ac superuacuos in halitum digerit ac sine sensu dissipat: crudos concoquit, mutatque in sanguinem alendo corpori idoneum: ex superuacuis autem crassos attenuat, lentósque detergit: ac proindè strenuè expedit obstructiones. Adhæc, quicquid concoquere non potest, id saltem præparat; viasque omnes corporis, quibus excludatur, patentiores expeditioresq; facit. Tum etiam expultrix facultas quæcũque præparata fuerint, in expurgationis viam adducit expellitque foras. Hinc plerumque aluus sponte solui-tur, vomitiones erumpunt, vrina profunditur vberior, cerebri excrementa defluunt; & quæ à purgationis via longiùs absunt, perspiratione dissipantur. Hic corpus vniuersum sublato quasi onere leuatur, respiratio libera fit ac facilis, mens sensusque omnes expeditiores alacrioresque euadunt. Hæc dum confert Inedia, impuro quidem corpori plerumque ventriculum vitiosis implet humoribus, vnde stomachi eroßones, vigiliæ, corporis perturbationes & vertigines; quòd scilicet insitus calor perinde ac medicamentum noxios humo-

humores exagitet in alimenti penuria. At verò perturbatos ea demùm subigit, domat atque depellit: vndè magna sequitur tranquillitas, & morborum multorumque symptomatum sedatio, superstite quidem etiamnum & integro naturali calore. Hæc sanè moderata efficit Inedia, vt quæ acres humores exacuit, incendit, calfacitque corpus. Immoderata verò, quoniam pabulo atque etiam superuacuo humore assumpto, ipsam quoque partium substantiam dissipat, quæ caloris est sedes; corpus tandem refrigerat, viresque commiuuit & obterit. Salubris est tempestiua abstinentia, & apprimè vtilis quæ per Inediam fit euacuatio. Etenim blandè nullaque violenta aut corporis aut humorum impulsione, nullaque aliena qualitate in corpus inducta, sensim ac lentè progreditur. Acutis porrò vrgentibusque morbis, solâ inediâ vix tutò succurri potest: sed aut venæ sectione, aut pharmaco expeditè vacuandus est corruptus & putridus humor, qui de sua bonitate plurimùm decessit; & quem insitus calor neque ampliùs in benignum reducere, neque derepente exturbare potest. At leues morbos ex cruditate futuros arcet cibi parsimonia: eosdem recèns genitos facile persanat Inedia: inueteratos quoque ebs plurimùm coctione lenit, tandemque profligat. Ea ipsa ex plenitudine futuros conuenienter inhibet, quòd sensim ac tempore onerantem copiam eximat. Qui verò iam præsentes ex copia sauiunt, eos non Inedia sed venæ sectio expeditè tollit. Sed & in crudioribus morbis materiæ situs æstimandus. Nam quum venis aut summis partibus vt capiti, vel plenitudo, vel cruditas, vel pituita grauis molestaq; est, cibus parcus siccusque confert; eâ moderatione, vt præcordia primasque par-

tes

tes ne collabantur alat, non autem ad corporis summa ipse pertingat. Quum vero aut in ventriculo aut in prima coporis regione vitium inhaeresit, multo parcior siccior q; victus imperandus. Inedia appellatur modò abstinentia, modò parsimonia non cibi duntaxat, sed & potûs, qui magis promptinsque quàm cibus tum viscera tum venas implet, ijsque negotium facessit. Quos igitur morbos Inedia non sustulit, medicatione curato.

The same in English.

OF those things which dreine and euacuate the body through the vpper parts, some doe apparently prouoke sweates, others digest vapours and thinne substance by breathing through the pores of the skin. In this kinde are contained Fasting, Anoynting, Rubbing: in that, Exercise, Bath, and Hot-houses.

Fasting comes necrest to blood-letting in force and vertue: wasting the blood by little and little, which blood-letting sends foorth at once and on a sudden. Besides that, it scatters and spends the raw and many other humours, and driues foorth all kind of excrements. For, nature being free and not hindred, doth forthwith procure vs all things that are healthfull. Therefore, when the wonted meate is either in part or in whole withdrawne from the body, so that there is want of it; then our inbred heate (the author of all our naturall functions) which is diffused and spred throughout all parts, being not encumbred by the abundance of new meat, euery where exercising its owne

owne force, growes strong. And first of all it changeth the profitable iuyce and blood into the substance of the body and the parts thereof, and consumes it, by turning it into nourishment: but the thinne humours and the superfluous it digests into vapours, and wastes them insensibly: the raw humors it concocts, and changes into blood fit for nourishing the body: and of the superfluous humors, the thicke ones it makes thinne, & scoureth away the slimy: and therefore it strongly riddeth obstructions. Moreouer, whatsoeuer it cannot concoct, that it prepares at least; and it makes all the passages of the body, by which it should be thrust out, more open and ready. Then also the expulsiue faculty carries away whatsoeuer was prepared, into the passages of purging, and expels it out. Hereupon most commonly the belly is loosened of its owne accord, vomitings burst out, vrine is made in more abundance, excrements of the braine flowe downe: and that which is further off from the passages of purging, is consumed by breathing through the pores of the skin. By these meanes, the whole body is eased, being disburdened as it were of its load, the breathing is made free and easie, the mind and all the sences become more ready and cheerefull.

Fasting, while it workes these things in a corrupt body, most commonly it fils the belly with ill humours: whence come gnawings of the stomacke, watchings, disturbances of the body, and giddines or swimmings in the head: namely, because the naturall heate doth in the want of nou-

 rishment

riſhment exagitate the noxious humors, as Phyſicke doth. But thoſe diſturbed humours at laſt it ſubdues, tames, and driues out: whereupon follows great tranquillity, and aſſwaging of diſeaſes and many ſymptomes, naturall heate hitherto remayning in his integrity and ſtrength.

Theſe things indeed doth moderate faſting effect, in that it whets the ſharpe humours, enflames, and heates the body. But immoderate faſting, becauſe both the nouriſhment and the ſuperfluous humour being ſpent, it waſtes alſo the very ſubſtance of the parts, which is the ſeat of heat, at length it cooles the body, and diminiſhes and impaires the ſtrength. Seaſonable abſtinence is wholſome; and moſt profitable is that euacuation which is made by faſting. For it works gently, and without any violent forcing either of the body or the humors, and without bringing into the body any vnnaturall quality, it proceeds ſoftly and by degrees.

Furthermore, ſharp and violent diſeaſes can ſcarce ſafely be holpen by faſting alone: but the corrupt and putrified humour, which hath much degenerated from the naturall goodnes, & which the inbred heate can neither any more reduce to its goodnes, nor ſuddenly driue it out, muſt bee preſently euacuated either by blood-letting, or purging. But light diſeaſes, that would riſe of crudities, ſparing dyet preuents: the ſame being newly bred, faſting eaſily cures: and when they become inueterate and old, it doth mitigate them by concoction, and at laſt driues them away. The

same fasting doth conueniently stop the diseases that would come of fulnes: because, by degrees and in processe of time, it takes away the abundance that burdens nature. But those diseases which now for the present doe rage by reason of fulnes, not fasting but blood-letting doth readily take away.

And besides, in cruder and rawer diseases, the place where the matter lyes is to bee considered. For, when eyther fulnes or crudity or flegme is burdensome and troublesome to the veines or the vpper parts, as to the head, then sparing and dry dyet is good: with that moderation, that it may nourish the numbles and chiefe parts that they waste not, and yet reach not so farre as to the vpper parts of the body. But when the fault stickes either in the ventricle or in the first region of the body, a much more sparing and dry dyet must be enioyned.

Fasting is called sometimes Abstinence, sometime a sparing not of meate only, but also of drink, which doth more and sooner then meate fill both the bowels & veynes, and finds them worke.

Therfore doe thou cure by Physicke,
those diseases, which fasting
hath not taken
away.

FINIS.